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FBIS-SOV-93-040 CONTENTS *3 March 1993*

NOTICE TO READERS: An * indicates material not disseminated in electronic form.

ARMS CONTROL & DISARMAMENT

- Shaposhnikov Backs Grachev on Nuclear Talks With Ukraine *[ITAR-TASS]* 1
- Ukraine's Kravchuk Views Conflict With Russia, Missiles *[Hamburg DER SPIEGEL 1 Mar]* 1
- Ukraine Defense Ministry Rejects Nuclear Safety Scare *[IZVESTIYA 25 Feb]* 3

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

- CSCE Rome Meeting Makes Progress on Nagorno-Karabakh *[ITAR-TASS]* 5
- International Seminar on Privatization Opens in Tashkent *[PRAVDA 23 Feb]* 5
- Russian, U.S., Portuguese Officials Confer on Angola *[ITAR-TASS]* 5

INTERREGIONAL AFFAIRS

- CIS Heads Continue Oil Meeting in Surgut 6
  - Kuchma Hopes for Deal With Russia *[INTERFAX]* 6
  - Moscow To Supply Oil to 3 Republics *[INTERFAX]* 6
  - Shafranik on Russian Responsibility *[INTERFAX]* 6
  - Details of Oil, Gas Council *[ITAR-TASS]* 7
  - Estonia 'Not Participating' *[BALTFAX]* 7
- Shaposhnikov Briefs Media on Collective Security *[IZVESTIYA 3 Mar]* 7
- Debate on CIS Armed Forces Structure Viewed *[KRASNAYA ZVEZDA 2 Mar]* 8
- Russian Admiral Gromov on Baltic, Black Sea Issues *[Moscow TV]* 9
- ITAR-TASS Carries Press Review for 3 March 10

RUSSIA INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

- Russia To Join Airdrop Relief Effort Over Bosnia *[ITAR-TASS]* 12
  - State Commission To Execute Airdrops *[INTERFAX]* 12
- Clinton Welcomes Russia's Help in Bosnian Airdrop *[ITAR-TASS]* 12
- Bosnia Airdrop Seen as Possible Prelude to Military Action *[PRAVDA 3 Mar]* 12
- Grachev Denies Russians Supplying Arms to Serbs, Croats *[ITAR-TASS]* 13
- Possible Serbian Role in New York Bombing Pondered *[NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA 2 Mar]* 13
- Clinton Expression of Support for Yeltsin Evaluated *[PRAVDA 2 Mar]* 14
- Christopher's Attitude to Russia Viewed *[ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA 2 Mar]* 15
- Change in U.S. Nuclear Targeting Policy Noted *[KRASNAYA ZVEZDA 27 Feb]* 16
- Yeltsin, Kozyrev Meet With French Foreign Minister *[Moscow TV]* 16
  - Ministers Sign Protocol; Mitterrand To Visit 16 Mar *[ITAR-TASS]* 17
  - Kozyrev Announces Plans for Bosnian Airdrop *[ITAR-TASS]* 17
  - Fedorov Assures Dumas Reform Policy To Continue *[INTERFAX]* 18
- Yeltsin-Kohl Meeting on Schedule Despite 'Doubts' *[INTERFAX]* 18
- German Embassy Blames 'Russian Bureaucracy' for Visa Delays *[IZVESTIYA 25 Feb]* 18
- Talks With Georgia on Abkhazia End *[ITAR-TASS]* 18
- Grachev Rebuts Attempts To Politicize Abkhazia Visit *[KRASNAYA ZVEZDA 2 Mar]* 19
  - Further on Georgia Visit, Ukraine Talks *[Russian TV]* 20
- Rutskoy Views Ties With Malaysia, Assails Western Aid *[ITAR-TASS]* 20
- Moscow Fails To Clinch MiG Deal With Malaysia *[INTERFAX]* 20
- Yeltsin Said Considering G-7 Summit Invitation *[KOMMERSANT-DAILY 2 Mar]* 21
- Moscow, PLO Call For Early Resumption of Arab-Israeli Talks *[ITAR-TASS]* 21
- Conference Held on Demarcation of Russian-Chinese Border *[Moscow International]* 21
- Economic, Military Agreements With Kazakhstan Viewed *[KRASNAYA ZVEZDA 2 Mar]* 21
- Talks With Moldova Focus on Russian Troop Withdrawal *[ITAR-TASS]* 22
- Latvian Minister's UN Speech Termed 'Irresponsible' *[ITAR-TASS]* 22

RUSSIA NATIONAL AFFAIRS

Political Issues

- Yeltsin Chairs National Security Council Meeting 24
  - Urges Action on Creating Military Doctrine *[ITAR-TASS]* 24

    - Shakhray, Kozyrev, Grachev, Others Attend *[INTERFAX]* 24
    - Kostikov on Meeting *[ITAR-TASS]* 24
- Foreign Ministry on Reaction to Yeltsin's Civic Union Speech *[INTERFAX]* 25
    - Stankevich Interprets Yeltsin's Remarks *[INTERFAX]* 25
- Yeltsin Speech at Civic Union Forum Assessed *[ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA 2 Mar]* 25
- Yeltsin's Overture to Civic Union First Sign of New Strategy *[IZVESTIYA 2 Mar]* 26
- Further on Yeltsin Address to Democratic Choice *[Russian TV]* 27
- Yeltsin Still To Decide on 'Soft,' 'Tough' Line *[ITAR-TASS]* 28
- Yeltsin Uncertain Congress To Pass Constitutional Accord *[INTERFAX]* 29
- Yeltsin on Surmounting Constitutional Crisis *[IZVESTIYA 3 Mar]* 29
- Rutskoy's Party Calls For Elections by 1994 *[ITAR-TASS]* 30
- Possible Need for State of Emergency Noted *[INTERFAX]* 30
- Shumeyko Interviewed on Referendum *[Russian TV]* 31
- Referendum Only Way Out of Constitutional Crisis *[NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA 2 Mar]* 32
- Spokesman Denies Yeltsin Directive To Resume Nuclear Tests *[Moscow Radio]* 33

Military & Space Issues

- Grachev: Army To Remain 'Guarantor' of State's Stability *[Russian TV]* 33
- Housing Shortage for Over 140,000 Servicmen Reported *[INTERFAX]* 33
- Army Surplus Arms To Be Channeled Through 'Voyentekh' Company *[KRASNAYA ZVEZDA 27 Feb]* 33
- Session Discusses Defense Industry's Problems *[KRASNAYA ZVEZDA 27 Feb]* 34
- General Staff Sets Up Environmental Protection Directorate *[ROSSIYSKIYE VESTI 26 Feb]* 34
- Moscow To Launch Start I Missile Carriers *[INTERFAX]* 34

Other Issues

- Funding Problems Slow Forming Ethnic Conflict Unit *[ROSSIYSKIYE VESTI 26 Feb]* 35

Constitutional Court Issues

- Constitutional Court Preparing Annual Report *[INTERFAX]* 35
- Opposition's Constitutional Amendment Proposals Pondered *[ROSSIYSKIYE VESTI 3 Mar]* 35
- Court Says Yeltsin's Disbanding of Front 'Unconstitutional' *[INTERFAX]* 36
- Court Rules President Exceeded Powers Over NSF Case *[ITAR-TASS]* 36

Supreme Soviet

- START II Treaty Sent to Committees for Discussion 37
    - No Objections Voiced *[ITAR-TASS]* 37
    - Parliamentary Hearings Begin *[INTERFAX]* 37
    - Chief of General Staff Comments *[INTERFAX]* 37
    - Kozyrev Comments on Ratification *[ITAR-TASS]* 38
    - Kozyrev on 'Nuclear Capitulation' *[INTERFAX]* 38
    - Opposition Leader Reacts *[INTERFAX]* 39
    - More on Hearings *[KRASNAYA ZVEZDA 3 Mar]* 39
- Council Rejects Opposition Proposal on Yeltsin Statement *[INTERFAX]* 39
- Legislation Committee Endorses 'Power Sharing' Bill *[INTERFAX]* 40
- 'Army Reform' Deputies Debate Army Problems *[ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA 2 Mar]* 40
- Chambers To Discuss Freedom of Assembly, Public Events *[Moscow TV]* 41
- Official Comments on Sending Troops to Tajikistan *[PRAVDA 2 Mar]* 41
- Parliament Debates Referendum Issue *[NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA 26 Feb]* 41
- Supreme Soviet Accepts Yeltsin Position on VAT Law *[KOMMERSANT-DAILY 26 Feb]* 42
- Khasbulatov's Views on Constitutional Accord Eyed *[ROSSIYSKIYE VESTI 20 Feb]* 43
- Abdulatipov, Shakhray at Nationalities Policy Hearings *[ROSSIYSKIYE VESTI 24 Feb]* 44
- Parliament's Foreign Policy Role Defended *[MOSKOVSKIYE NOVOSTI 28 Feb]* 44

Regional Affairs

- Chechnya Opposes Curfew in Neighboring Ingush Regions *[ITAR-TASS]* 45
- Chechen Parliament Lifts Curfew, State of Emergency *[Russian TV]* 46
- Further on Kislovodsk-Baku 28 Feb Train Explosion *[INTERFAX]* 46
    - Security Ministry Denies Involvement *[ITAR-TASS]* 46
    - Further Reaction to Train Explosion *[IZVESTIYA 2 Mar]* 46
- Ingush's Aushev To Appeal to Ossetian People for Peace *[INTERFAX]* 47
    - New President Seen Loyal to Russia *[NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA 2 Mar]* 48
    - To Take Office 7 Mar *[ITAR-TASS]* 48
- Head of Ossetia Administration Interviewed *[KRASNAYA ZVEZDA 26 Feb]* 48

Tatarstan, Crimea Sign Cooperation Agreement *[NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA 2 Mar]* 49
Kuzbass Mines on Strike; Vorkuta Miners Make New Demands *[INTERFAX]* 50
    Pechora Basin Miners Resume Work *[ITAR-TASS]* 51
St. Petersburg Mayor Says Referendum in Danger *[ITAR-TASS]* 51
    City Short of Cash *[INTERFAX]* 51
Saratov Inhabitants Divided Over Referendum Participation *[ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA 27 Feb]* 51

UKRAINE

International Affairs

Official Says Russia 'Blocking' START I Ratification *[Radio Rossii]* 53
Further Denial of Nuclear Warhead Sale to Palestinians *[Moscow International]* 53
Official Disagrees With Russia's 'Special' Peacekeeping Role *[INTERFAX]* 53
Plyushch Evaluates Black Sea Organization's Work *[Kiev International]* 53
Kravchuk Interviewed on Role in Post Cold War World *[Budapest MAGYAR NEMZET 26 Feb]* 54

National Affairs

'Sharp Disagreements' Halt 2 Mar Parliament Session *[INTERFAX]* 55
    Plyushch's Actions Protested *[ITAR-TASS]* 56
    Kravchuk Report Postponed *[Kiev TV]* 56
Labor Gathering Calls For Urgent Economic Measures *[Kiev TV]* 56

WESTERN REGION

Belarus

Minsk Reduces Conventional Armaments *[INTERFAX]* 57
Conditions for Signing CIS Security Agreement Noted *[INTERFAX]* 57
Shushkevich Assigns Priority to Nuclear Energy, Agriculture *[INTERFAX]* 57
Romanian Foreign Minister Invites Shushkevich to Bucharest *[Bucharest ROMPRES]* 58
U.S. To Grant Further Agricultural Assistance *[Minsk Radio]* 58
Alcohol, Food Prices Raised Despite Promises of Stability *[BELINFORM]* 58
National Press Center Created *[Minsk Radio]* 58

Moldova

Parliament Begins Draft Constitution Discussion 2 Mar *[INTERFAX]* 58
    Snegur Presents New Draft *[ITAR-TASS]* 59
    Further on Draft Constitution *[INTERFAX]* 59
Commission Agrees on Settlement Provisions for Dniester *[Moscow Radio]* 60
Moscow, Chisinau Agree To Remove Mines From Dniester *[INTERFAX]* 60
Prospect of Political Settlement With Regions Viewed *[NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA 2 Mar]* 60
Tensions Persist in Tighina; Compromise Reached *[BASAPRESS]* 61

CENTRAL ASIA

Kazakhstan

President Delegates Top Executive Responsibilities *[INTERFAX]* 62
Presidential Edict Forms Special 'Anti-Mafia' Groups *[KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA 27 Feb]* 62

Kyrgyzstan

Vice President Visits Tajik Border, Comments on Refugees *[INTERFAX]* 63
    Measures Taken Regarding Tajik Opposition *[IZVESTIYA 26 Feb]* 63

Tajikistan

Iranian Ambassador Denies Iran's Support to Rebels *[ITAR-TASS]* 63
Government Not To Impose Blockade on Autonomous Region *[INTERFAX]* 63
Reserve Officers Called Up; Fighting Continues *[Moscow Radio]* 64
Refugees Talk of 'Ethnic Cleansing' in Border Areas *[NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA 2 Mar]* 64
Two Russians Killed, One Injured on Afghan Border *[INTERFAX]* 65
Russia Agrees To Restore Air Defenses on Afghan Border *[INTERFAX]* 65
Government Successes Against Opposition Forces Noted *[IZVESTIYA 27 Feb]* 65
Islamic Fighters 'Hiding Behind Civilians' *[KRASNAYA ZVEZDA 26 Feb]* 65
Internal Affairs Minister on Law Enforcement Problems *[ITAR-TASS]* 66

Turkmenistan

Further on Visit by Georgian Prime Minister Sigua *[Moscow TV]* 66
    Republic To Supply Georgia With Gas *[INTERFAX]* 66

Uzbekistan

Commission Urges Professionally Implementing Reforms *[INTERFAX]* 67
Diplomatic Relations With 64 States Reported *[UZBEKISTAN APN]* 67
Small Percentage of Russians Want To Leave *[INTERFAX]* 67

CAUCASUS

Armenia

Karabakh Forces 'Firmly Control' Sarsang Dam *[Yerevan Radio]* 68
NKR Disarming Groups; Attack on NKR Official Reported *[Yerevan Radio]* 68
Parliamentary Elections Set for Early Autumn *[INTERFAX]* 68
Food Prices Increase by 150-200 Percent in 1993 *[ITAR-TASS]* 68

Azerbaijan

One Month State of Emergency in 3 Rayons *[Baku Radio]* 68
Forces Repel Armenian Attack on Sarsang Dam 1 Mar *[Baku Radio]* 68
Defense Ministry, Russian Army Roles in Attempted Coup *[TURAN]* 69
Parliament Sets Conditions for Cooperation With Armenia *[ITAR-TASS]* 69
First Deputy Prime Minister Departs for Georgia *[Yerevan Radio]* 69
Committee on Economic Ties With Former USSR Republics Set Up *[Baku Radio]* 69
Opposition: Government Employing Fiscal Intimidation *[ASSA-IRADA]* 69

Georgia

Shevardnadze on Ties With Russia, New Abkhaz Offensive *[INTERFAX]* 70
Shevardnadze Says Grachev Visit Worsened Relations *[CONTACT INFORMATION AGENCY]* . 70
Shevardnadze Proposes Meeting With Abkhazians *[INTERFAX]* 70
    Wants Information on Grachev Visit *[ITAR-TASS]* 70
'Fierce Fighting' Continues in Tkvarcheli Area *[Moscow TV]* 70
    Russian Military Laboratory Shelled *[INTERFAX]* 71
Border Troops Criticize Border Organization *[SAKARTVELOS RESPUBLIKA 26 Feb]* 71
Syrians, Jordanians, Turks in Abkhazia Fighting *[Moscow Radio]* 72
Gas Pipeline Supplying Armenia Blown Up Again *[INTERFAX]* 72

BALTIC STATES

Estonia

Velliste on Talks With Polish President, Prime Minister *[ETA NEWS BULLETIN]* 73
Ninth Round of Talks Begins With Russia *[BALTFAX]* 73
'Petserimaa' Association Pickets Russian Embassy *[ETA NEWS RELEASE]* 73

Latvia

Delegation Led by Gorbunovs Visits France 73
    Meets Senate President *[Riga Radio]* 73
    Holds Press Conference *[LETA]* 74
    Signs Cooperation Treaty *[ITAR-TASS]* 74
    Rejects Russian Call for Special Authority *[Riga Radio]* 74
Russian Officer Says Troop Withdrawal on Schedule *[BALTFAX]* 75
People's Front for Selling Land to Non-Citizens *[BALTFAX]* 75

Lithuania

Bank Chairman Baldisis Presents Resignation *[BALTFAX]* 75
Yeltsin, Clinton Congratulate Brazauskas on Inauguration *[BALTFAX]* 75
Russia To Supply Natural Gas for One Year *[Vilnius Radio]* 75
Sajudis Blames LDLP for Economic Deterioration *[ELTA NEWS BULLETIN]* 76
Ministry Prepares Trade Cooperation Accord With Ukraine *[BALTFAX]* 76
Government, Trade Unions Sign Agreement *[ELTA NEWS BULLETIN]* 76

Shaposhnikov Backs Grachev on Nuclear Talks With Ukraine

LD0203170393 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1527 GMT 2 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS correspondents Vadim Byrkin and Andrey Naryshkin]

[Text] Moscow, 2 Mar (ITAR-TASS)—The second round of Russo-Ukrainian talks on strategic forces began today at Arkhangelskoye near Moscow. The Russian side at the talks is headed by Colonel General Boris Gromov, the deputy minister of defense.

As we have already reported, Army General Pavel Grachev, Russia's minister of defense, told journalists this morning that if the problem of control over strategic nuclear forces deployed in the Ukraine is not resolved positively at the talks, he will issue a special statement to the press.

"I am prepared to subscribe to every single word of the statement which Defense Minister Pavel Grachev intends to make in the event that the Russo-Ukrainian talks on nuclear weapons reach deadlock, and I am aware of what the statement says. But it would be preferable if this statement were not made by the minister of defense but by a political leader." This was what Air Marshal Yevgeniy Shaposhnikov, commander in chief of the CIS Joint Armed Forces, said today when asked by an ITAR-TASS correspondent to comment on the Russian minister's position.

Ukraine's Kravchuk Views Conflict With Russia, Missiles

AU0203084593 Hamburg DER SPIEGEL in German 1 Mar 93 pp 151-153

[Interview with Ukrainian President Leonid Kravchuk by Martina Melmerich and Olaf Ihlau in Kravchuk's office in Kiev; date not given: "Freedom Is Freedom"]

[Text] [DER SPIEGEL] Mr. President, you said at one time that existing side by side with Russia is like sharing a bed with an elephant. Is Ukraine now being crushed by this elephant?

[Kravchuk] That was actually meant to express our respect for Russia. I intended to stress its power.

[DER SPIEGEL] And thus also the danger that may emanate from Russia?

[Kravchuk] Of course. When such a great state carries out abrupt changes—in politics, in the economic sector, or in border affairs—we feel it immediately.

[DER SPIEGEL] Russia is currently threatening to stop the supply of oil and gas, if you refuse in the future to pay world market prices. Is there a sort of political blackmail behind it?

[Kravchuk] Why should I reproach Russia for selling oil at world market prices? However, then Russia must also accept the idea that many other things are calculated on the basis of world market prices and sold accordingly—for instance, the use of Ukraine's infrastructure with its pipelines, roads, railroads, and airspace. Russia needs them for its exports to the West. I advocate fairness. If someone asks us to pay world market prices, then I would suggest world market prices for everything.

[DER SPIEGEL] Did you figure out what you could demand from the Russians in return?

[Kravchuk] Of course I did. We would end up well and would have enough hard currency to pay for oil and natural gas.

[DER SPIEGEL] Russian Deputy Prime Minister Aleksandr Shokhin has offered Ukraine a rebate for raw material supplies if it agrees to the setting up of Russian military bases. Do such offers irritate you?

[Kravchuk] Economic problems should not be linked with military and political aspects. Economic agreements must be based on the nations' interests. I will never yield to military pressure.

[DER SPIEGEL] There is also a dispute with Moscow over the 176 intercontinental missiles based in Ukraine. Is it true that you do not receive the necessary technical assistance from Russia to maintain and protect those weapons?

[Kravchuk] We believe that Russia too has an interest in seeing these missiles safe.

[DER SPIEGEL] But the Moscow IZVESTIYA sees in the Ukrainian missile silos the "danger of another Chernobyl," and safety tests are allegedly no longer carried out regularly at 16 missile launching bases where increased doses of radioactivity have reportedly been noted.

[Kravchuk] That is not true, these are rumors. I have detailed information from the Defense Ministry, saying that all silos are safe and under control. Russia is giving technical aid and will continue to do so. There is just one problem that has not been correctly described. Russia says: The missile bases on Ukrainian territory are Russian property. According to this, Russia would maintain its own missiles in our country.

[DER SPIEGEL] Of course you do not agree.

[Kravchuk] We do not claim operational missiles. But we want to have the components of the missiles once they are disassembled.

[DER SPIEGEL] What for?

[Kravchuk] That is a matter of principle. If we claimed the operational missiles, we would promptly be considered one of the nuclear powers. We reject that, however.

[DER SPIEGEL] Do you intend to sell the devilish nuclear stuff to the highest bidder?

[Kravchuk] No. We want to reuse the uranium in our nuclear power plants. It is manufactured into fuel rods in Russia and we then use it.

[DER SPIEGEL] Your national democratic opposition would prefer to keep the nuclear weapons—as a deterrent against any territorial claims by Russia.

[Kravchuk] That is a certain group to which some sections of the opposition and other deputies belong. There are not very many of them.

[DER SPIEGEL] In western Ukraine, 50 percent of the people would allegedly like to see their country continue as an atomic power.

[Kravchuk] I do not know of such opinion polls; by the way, the START I disarmament treaty will be ratified by parliament, not by the people.

[DER SPIEGEL] But there is apparently opposition in this parliament to the ratification of the START I agreement. The deputies demand security guarantees of the nuclear powers and financial compensation first.

[Kravchuk] There are such deputies. But we will solve the problem of the security guarantees. There are already agreements with the United States, Russia, Great Britain, and we are also discussing the problem with France.

[DER SPIEGEL] Are your missiles perhaps a pawn for the desirable billions from the West?

[Kravchuk] We need money for the destruction of our nuclear weapons. I held talks with the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development on the creation of a fund to finance the scrapping of the missiles. The destruction of such weapons costs a lot of money. Ukraine is currently experiencing a serious economic crisis. If we were to use our whole budget now for scrapping the missiles, our people would not understand that. So we need help.

[DER SPIEGEL] Reportedly you want $2.5 billion.

[Kravchuk] I do not know of this figure. The most important thing is to destroy the missiles. There are no exact cost estimates. When we have eliminated the first missile base, it will be clear what it costs.

[DER SPIEGEL] But if you were to remain a nuclear power, the whole nuclear disarmament program would be obstructed. Moscow has already said that in such a case, it could not accept a further reduction in its strategic nuclear weapons, as agreed upon with the United States in the START II treaty.

[Kravchuk] Our parliament is aware of its responsibility. Ukraine will not obstruct disarmament and the destruction of nuclear weapons. We must see one thing: Ukraine did not build the missiles on its territory, but it is now responsible for their destruction. That is a legacy of the Soviet Union, which we must deal with, and Ukraine cannot do so alone.

[DER SPIEGEL] When will START I be ratified?

[Kravchuk] It is already on the agenda for the next parliamentary sessions.

[DER SPIEGEL] The West expects you to close down the unsafe nuclear power plant at Chernobyl before the end of this year. Given the Ukrainian energy crisis, is this hope realistic at all?

[Kravchuk] It is very realistic. We are making preparations now. Germany has helped us considerably in this respect. Closing down this nuclear power plant is also a safety issue.

[DER SPIEGEL] So Chernobyl will be stopped before the end of 1993 at the latest?

[Kravchuk] Of course.

[DER SPIEGEL] How do you dispose of the fuel rods from Ukrainian nuclear power plants that Russia does not want?

[Kravchuk] We have prepared a program for the storage of radioactive waste and will solve the problem as all countries having nuclear power plants do.

[DER SPIEGEL] This means that Ukraine is continuing to rely on nuclear energy, instead of reducing it in view of the Chernobyl disaster.

[Kravchuk] When and if we get the safety problems under control, nuclear energy will continue to be developed further everywhere—including in Ukraine.

[DER SPIEGEL] When are you going to sign the treaty on the nonproliferation of nuclear weapons?

[Kravchuk] Our parliament will simultaneously decide on the START agreement and the treaty on the nonproliferation of nuclear weapons. I introduced both documents in parliament in November last year.

[DER SPIEGEL] Ukraine has been independent since August 1991. Has it been worthwhile to secede from the Soviet Union?

[Kravchuk] You do not have to ask a canary in its cage whether it wants to be free or not. If the door is open, it will fly away. The bird does not have guarantees either; it was safe in its cage. Ukraine lived in a cage for 350 years. Today it wants to have its own state and knows that this is not easy.

[DER SPIEGEL] But the bird that flew away has lost quite a lot of flesh.

[Kravchuk] That is true, but the bird does not think about it, because freedom is freedom.

[DER SPIEGEL] Is there no disappointment at the lack of investments and credits from the West?

[Kravchuk] I am annoyed to note that the West does not see what is happening here. The West assesses events here by the prism of its own interests. It would prefer to deal only with a single nuclear state. I hear from the West time and again that it would be better if the Soviet Union still existed. That does not prove particular understanding for the interests of the peoples that had to live in the Soviet empire. But any attempt to reestablish something like the Soviet Union would lead to a terrible war that would be worse than the war in the former Yugoslavia.

[DER SPIEGEL] That sounds as if you see an acute danger.

[Kravchuk] Europe and the rest of the world must know that any attempt to return to the old Soviet Union could lead to a catastrophe. We are told that we should first stabilize our country, and then we would be aided. However, once we have stabilized our country, we do not need help any more.

[DER SPIEGEL] Who is trying to turn back the wheel of history—those who intend to replace Yeltsin in Russia?

[Kravchuk] Such forces are active. They appear at the sessions of the newly founded Communist Party of Russia and at massive demonstrations in Moscow.

[DER SPIEGEL] The Communist Party also intends to reorganize itself in Ukraine.

[Kravchuk] Yes, unfortunately, these forces are having an easy game because of the economic crisis.

[DER SPIEGEL] But there is no real reform in the Ukrainian economic system. Have you lost the courage to carry out changes? Parliament is even blocking the privatization of small and medium-sized companies.

[Kravchuk] Privatization is just a small part of the reform program. In Lvov an auction of small companies took place just recently. We are also beginning to form joint-stock companies now. Privatization cannot be carried out more swiftly than the people want. We must avoid social unrest.

[DER SPIEGEL] How do you know that the people are opposed to privatization?

[Kravchuk] It is a special feature of our state that uncontrolled privatization is not possible here. This could lead to a catastrophe. The liberalization of the economic sector must be controlled by the state. It was our mistake that we did not see this from the start.

[DER SPIEGEL] So you do not by any means want to carry out a drastic change to the market economy, as Poland did, even though successes have been achieved there now after three bitter years?

[Kravchuk] I would like to see this success consolidated in Poland. However, if a country wants to become an independent state, it must be able to produce its own goods and not just resell foreign products.

[DER SPIEGEL] Your problem is that you depend 80 percent on Russia for your energy imports, and most of your products go to Russia. So Ukraine depends much more on Russia than other Eastern European countries.

[Kravchuk] That is true. A total of 77 percent of the goods traffic within the CIS republics is handled between Ukraine and Russia. That is why our relations are so important.

[DER SPIEGEL] Should the CIS remain as it is, or should it be reformed?

[Kravchuk] It should remain as it is. The crucial issue—economic agreement between the CIS members involved—must be solved within the framework of the CIS. If we succeed in doing so, the CIS will prosper. Economic cooperation is the most important thing. We are not ready to accept political integration. Western Europe, too, has not yet formed a political union either.

[DER SPIEGEL] Mr. President, we thank you for this interview.

Ukraine Defense Ministry Rejects Nuclear Safety Scare

PM0203124593 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 25 Feb 93 p 2

[Ukrainian Defense Ministry Press Service statement, accompanied by introduction and editorial office comment: "Ukrainian Defense Ministry Rebuts IZVESTIYA Article Via Its Own Newpaper"]

[Text] On 16 February 1993 IZVESTIYA published an article by Viktor Litovkin entitled "Second Chernobyl Brewing in Ukraine's Missile Silos." That article, NARODNA ARMIYA says, could have broad political repercussions and cause alarm in the world community over the nuclear and environmental safety of strategic nuclear weapons deployed on the territory of Ukraine.

Kiev, 23 February—The Ukrainian Defense Ministry Press Service is authorized to state that the IZVESTIYA article is not in keeping with the spirit of relations existing between Ukraine and the Russian Federation on the question of guaranteeing the safety of nuclear weapons and reports incorrectly the cause of the existing difficulties in guaranteeing nuclear safety.

A meeting between state delegations of Ukraine and the Russian Federation headed by Ukrainian President Leonid Kravchuk and Russian Federation President Boris Yeltsin was held on 15 January 1993. For the purpose of guaranteeing the nuclear and ecological safety of the strategic nuclear forces in Ukraine and Russia, the sides agreed to specify a system of material and technical backup and implementation of work to ensure the supervision of the operation of the strategic nuclear forces' missile systems in accordance with the warranties and as specified by the designers. The governments of Ukraine and the Russian Federation were instructed to prepare and conclude specific agreements to ensure the implementation of this accord.

The Ukrainian and Russian Federation state commissions have already conducted the first round of talks on problems of ensuring nuclear and environmental security and fulfilling the terms of the START Treaty since its ratification by the Ukrainian Supreme Soviet. A draft agreement between Ukraine and the Russian Federation on material and technical backup and supervision in accordance with the warranties and as specified by the designers has been prepared, and constructive dialogue and a search for mutually acceptable solutions regarding all questions connected with nuclear weapons are under way.

Ukraine is indeed experiencing certain difficulties in ensuring technical backup for combat missile systems. These difficulties are due to the disruption of economic links between Ukraine and the Russian Federation, as a consequence of which units of the Strategic Missile Forces in Ukraine have been unable to obtain promptly components and spare parts produced on the territory of the Russian Federation. For that reason responsibility for the safety of nuclear weapons deployed in Ukraine should be equally shared by the Ukrainian and Russian sides.

In preparing the article on nuclear missiles in Ukraine the IZVESTIYA journalist did not contact the Ukrainian Defense Ministry and expressed a subjective, one-sided view of the problem in his article. He did not have sufficient grounds to talk about a real threat of nuclear catastrophe at missile force facilities in Ukraine.

The question of the future of nuclear weapons is not an idle one and there is no room for any deception herein. It cannot be interpreted in a vague way or contain ambiguity. Both Ukraine and Russia are convinced of this.

As of today there are no grounds for doubting that the two neighboring friendly states are capable of guaranteeing the complete nuclear and environmental safety of nuclear weapons." [no opening quotation mark as published]

From the editorial office:

While publishing this statement we are obliged to acknowledge that it bears... no relation whatsoever to the article by our IZVESTIYA military correspondent entitled "Second Chernobyl Brewing in Ukraine's Missile Silos," as that article—from its first to its last line—touched on the military technical and economic aspects of the safety of nuclear weapons deployed in Ukraine: For example, the fact that 16 SS-24 missile launchers on alert status in Pervomaysk have overrun the scheduled inspection and maintenance date by 8 to 10 months or the fact that the defense and protection systems at 20 launchpads have been defective for more than two months now...

These and other more than alarming facts were, clearly, not invented by the journalist. The article was based on facts uncovered by investigation carried out by specialists of the Strategic Missile Forces Main Staff. And the conclusions about the potential for disasters involving nuclear weapons were drawn by those people vested with legal authority.

However, the Ukrainian Defense Ministry has preferred not to notice the obvious, switching the argument about the state of the missiles from the military technical to the political plane. Incidentally, the repeated attempts by the author of the article to obtain at least some comment at the Ukrainian Defense Ministry ended each time with a categorical refusal. On 23 February, when Litovkin tried to get through on a military line to Lieutenant General Aleksey Kryzhko, chief of the center of the Administrative Directorate of the Ukrainian Defense Ministry Strategic Nuclear Forces, the latter told the caller—and this was heard in Moscow—to say that the general was not in his office.

Alas, the Ukrainian Defense Ministry Press Service's official response offers no reassurance on the question of the complete safety of the nuclear missiles.

CSCE Rome Meeting Makes Progress on Nagorno-Karabakh

LD0203134393 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1259 GMT 2 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Aleksey Bukalov]

[Text] Rome March 2 TASS—A regular phase of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) Rome meeting on Nagorno-Karabakh has ended.

On the night of Monday to Tuesday [1-2 March], participants in the meeting succeeded in coordinating a joint document which approves a draft mandate of an Advance Group of Observers (AGO). The document urges the CSCE to send a preparatory mission to the conflict zone to make an estimate of the group's organisational, infrastructural and financial requirements.

The Rome meeting was attended by ambassadors at large of 11 countries—Azerbaijan, Armenia, Belarus, Germany, Italy, the United States, Turkey, France, the Czech Republic and Sweden—as well as by representatives of the Armenian population and of the Azerbaijani community of Nagorno-Karabakh.

The meeting was presided over by Italian diplomat Mario Raffaelli. Formally, following the break-up of Czechoslovakia, representatives of the Czech and Slovak Republics were included in the Minsk group but a Slovak representative had not arrived in Rome.

Ambassador Vladimir Kazimirov, who represents the Russian Federation in the Minsk group, in an ITAR-TASS interview, expressed satisfaction with the results of the meeting. He described the up-and-down talks as very difficult. Headway has been at last made in preparations for a Minsk conference on Nagorno-Karabakh. A decision to convene a Minsk CSCE conference had been take by the CSCE council almost a year ago—on March 24, 1992.

The document, adopted by participants in the meeting, has been under discussion for many months and the getting of agreement on it is a considerable step forward. Kazimirov also cited as highly positive the fact of direct talks between the Armenian and Azerbaijani delegations within the framework of the Rome meeting.

Next meeting of the Minsk group is scheduled for the beginning of April and is likely to be held in the Italian capital again.

International Seminar on Privatization Opens in Tashkent

PM0203115193 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 23 Feb 93 p 4

[Vilor Niyazmatov report: "Place of Meeting—Tashkent"]

[Text] An international seminar on privatization, being held under the auspices of the United Nations, began its work in Uzbekistan's capital yesterday. Its participants—representatives of Britain, Poland, Turkey, China, the United States, France, Germany, and other states—will, over a period of five days, discuss key aspects of the economic reform and the transition to a socially oriented market economy using Uzbekistan as an example. The republic government is hoping, with help from foreign specialists, to make appropriate adjustments to the legal base, principles, approaches, methods, and mechanisms of the privatization being implemented here, and to firm up the process of the formation of the economy's private sector and the forms of state control and management of enterprises' activities during the transitional period.

Russian, U.S., Portuguese Officials Confer on Angola

LD2602190593 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1507 GMT 26 Feb 93

[By ITAR-TASS diplomatic correspondent Leonid Timofeyev]

[Text] Moscow February 26 TASS—A meeting of representatives of Russia, Portugal and the United States, overseeing the Angolan settlement process, expressed profound concern in connection with the on-going bloodshed and a threat of restoration of the large-scale civil war fraught with Angolan disintegration.

The meeting was held on February 23 in Lisbon, director of the Russian Foreign Ministry's information and Press Department Sergey Yastrzhembskiy told correspondents here today.

In his words, the sides reaffirmed free and just character of last year's elections in Angola. They noted the lawfulness of power structures created in the country on elections results. Meeting participants called on the warring sides to immediately cease fire and return to the fulfillment of Lisbon agreements and resolutions of the United Nations Security Council. They called special attention to the fact any outside interference in Angolan internal affairs is inadmissible.

Speaking on Moscow's stand on the Angolan crisis, Sergey Yastrzhembskiy said the Lisbon meeting can serve as a good prologue to negotiations between representatives of the Angolan Government and UNITA [National Union for the Total Independence of Angola] scheduled for today in Addis Ababa, help the sides find a constructive way out of the crisis and jointly participate in the formation of single democratic Angola.

CIS Heads Continue Oil Meeting in Surgut

Kuchma Hopes for Deal With Russia

OW0103140393 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1332 GMT 1 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Ukrainian Prime Minister Leonid Kuchma has informed an Interfax correspondent in Surgut that it is very likely that at the end of the week, Moscow and Kiev will sign an agreement according to which Ukraine will allocate approximately 200 billion rubles in capital investment for the restoration of Tyumen oil wells and the construction of roads, housing, and social, cultural, and consumer facilities in the Tyumen oblast.

Kuchma reported that the level of prices on Russian oil and gas delivered to Ukraine had not been specified. The problem, he said, would be discussed in Moscow in the next few days.

Commenting on a statement by the Russian concern Gazprom about the possible cessation of gas deliveries to Ukraine due to Ukrainian nonpayment, Kuchma said that he "had not heard" any such announcement from the Russian government. He expressed a determined certainty that gas deliveries would continue.

Moscow To Supply Oil to 3 Republics

OW0203105493 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1026 GMT 2 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Russia has completed bilateral agreements with Armenia, Belarus, and Kyrgyzstan on the conditions for the delivery of Russian oil in exchange for equipment and materials for Russia's fuel and energy complex. Russian Vice-Premier Georgiy Khizha told an INTERFAX correspondent on Tuesday [2 March] that the agreement is a sort of framework and does not contain specific numbers for volumes and prices, which would be specified by protocols to the agreement.

The agreement was signed during Tuesday's conference of CIS, Baltic, and Transcaucasian heads of state and plenipotentiary representatives on cooperation in the development of the fuel and energy complex of Western Siberia. The agreements are analogous to those planned for signing with the remaining republics of the former USSR, noted Khizha.

Touching on the conflict with Ukraine on the delivery of Russian gas to the republic, Khizha said that "the gas will not be turned off before the talks between the prime ministers of the two countries which may take place in Moscow at the end of the week."

Ukrainian Prime Minister Leonid Kuchma, in an interview with INTERFAX, called for the development of processes of economic integration throughout the former USSR. He is convinced that the conference in Surgut was an important step in this direction. Kuchma believes that Russo-Ukrainian economic relations should be free from political ambitions. He also reported that at the coming negotiations with Viktor Chernomyrdin in Moscow, besides the question of energy deliveries, the problems involved in the division of the foreign debt of the former USSR will be discussed.

Georgian government head Tengiz Sigua believes that the agreement signed in Surgut establishing an intergovernmental council on oil and gas and other documents were successfully formulated in such a way as to satisfy the interests of all parties to them. He explained that he had in mind arrangements for the establishment of joint ventures, especially open joint-stock companies in the fuel and energy sector. He stated that Georgia was ready to offer Russia 200,000 tons of pipes and motors, as well as the restoration of social, consumer, and cultural facilities in exchange for stock in Russian oil and gas enterprises. Russia, for its part, could receive the right to the property of Georgian enterprises which serve the needs of the fuel and energy complex.

Tengiz Sigua noted that any European or Asian state which so desired could become a member of the intergovernmental council on oil and gas, and not just the republics of the former USSR.

Kazakh government head Sergey Tereshchenko contends that in Surgut, "at least everybody finally understood that the oil problem should be resolved together." He remarked that his republic was the first to sign an agreement with Russia on energy deliveries for 1993. He opined that the only factor complicating Russo-Kazakh economic relations is Russia's unwillingness to withdraw tariffs on trade with Alma-Ata.

Tereshchenko called upon Russia and other republics of the former USSR to invest material resources in Kazakhstan's oil industry, whose volume of extraction would, he said, reach 80 million tons of oil per day by the year 2000, as compared with 27.5 million tons per year currently.

Shafranik on Russian Responsibility

OW0203145893 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1422 GMT 2 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The Russian Fuel and Energy Minister Yuriy Shafranik believes that the agreement on the creation of an intergovernmental council on oil and gas and other documents signed on Tuesday [2 March] in Surgut by the premiers and plenipotentiary representatives of 12 former USSR republics will lay the foundation to restore Russia's coordinating role in the fuel and energy complex.

Addressing a working session attended by leaders of Russia's oil complex enterprises in Surgut (more than 150 directors), the minister "highly appreciated" the results of the meeting between heads of governments on oil and gas problems, as it gives a new stimulus to the development of bilateral cooperation and direct contacts between enterprises and regions.

At the same time, mentioning the results of the Surgut meeting, Shafranik stated that "the republics are still in the self-deception condition" with respect to the possibility of additional deliveries of fuel and energy from Russia above the fixed quotas.

The minister underlined that "Russia's interests should take top priority" in its relations with partners from former Soviet republics.

Shafranik reported that the headquarters of the intergovernmental council on oil and gas will be based in Tyumen (a provincial center in Western Siberia).

Commenting on the outcome of the meeting during his conversation with our Interfax correspondent, experts from the Russian delegation emphasized the fact that for the first time, economic agreements crossed the borders of the CIS. Secondly, never before had premiers and other leaders of the former Soviet republics managed to reach principal agreements in such a short period of time, including such a complex procedure as an agreement and final approval of the charter of a new intergovernmental organization, namely, the intergovernmental council on oil and gas.

Details of Oil, Gas Council

LD0203155993 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1343 GMT 2 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Mikhail Prutkin]

[Text] Surgut Tyumen Region March 2 TASS—Former Soviet republics have signed an agreement to set up an intergovernmental council for oil and gas which is the first step on the way to the economic integration between former Soviet republics.

However, many problems remained unresolved, in particular, prices for raw materials, oil and gas transportation and deliveries of necessary equipment.

Vladimir Medvedev, president of the Association of the Union of Oil Industry, said that "some leaders of delegations who arrived in Surgut, have failed to realise that the current energy crisis has reached a critical point and that everyone should make efforts to improve the situation without counting on immediate success. Otherwise, next year oil extraction will not be sufficient even for Russia itself," Medvedev said.

"If the intergovernmental council becomes a declaratory body, no realistic results should be expected. One should not attempt to divide a tiny brook which is narrowing with every passing day, but take cardinal measures to save the oil industry," said Viktor Paliy, director general of Nizhnevartovsk Neftegaz Association.

Russian Prime Minister [title as received] Georgiy Khizha told journalists that problems of gas supplies to Ukraine are expected to be resolved during the next week. The signing of bilateral agreements with neighbouring states entailing concrete commitments of countries-parties to the agreements, will be continued. The first three agreements were signed in Surgut.

Estonia 'Not Participating'

OW0203184493 Moscow BALTFAX in English 1728 GMT 2 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Contrary to the reports from some information agencies, representatives of Estonia are not participating in the conference of prime ministers of former Soviet republics being held in Surgut.

"We did not receive any information about this conference. At least no one from the Estonian government has gone to Surgut, and there are no representatives of Eesti Kuutus (Estonia's state fuel company - BF [BALTFAX]) there," reported Deputy Chancellor of the Estonian Economics Ministry Arvi Hamburg to Baltfax.

On Tuesday [2 March] at the Surgut conference an agreement was signed on forming an intergovernmental council on oil and gas. The document was signed by prime ministers and plenipotentiary representatives of all the former republics, except Turkmenistan, Latvia, and Estonia.

Shaposhnikov Briefs Media on Collective Security

PM0303114993 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 3 Mar 93 p 2

[Viktor Litovkin report: "Marshal Shaposhnikov Proposes Mechanism for Implementing Collective Security Treaty"]

[Text] Marshal of Aviation Yevgeniy Shaposhnikov, commander in chief of the CIS Joint Armed Forces [JAF], held a press conference for Russian and foreign journalists. Its theme was the Conference of Defense Ministers of the States Parties to the Collective Security Treaty held the day before.

"For this treaty to work," the Marshal stated, "its military structures must be augmented by political ones."

Shaposhnikov said that the military has prepared a package of documents for the forthcoming meeting of CIS heads of states which envisage the creation of a Collective Security Council. It will include the presidents and prime ministers of the six states which have signed the treaty. This organ will support the Defense and Security Ministers Council. There will also be a Secretariat and High Command of the JAF which will include the armies of all the states. The High Command itself will have committees for nuclear and operational planning, work with personnel, and other organs that every large military staff needs.

The marshal also advocated the integration of the defense industries of Russia, Kazakhstan, Armenia, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, and Tajikistan and their implementation of a single military-technical policy, which will make it possible to maintain the JAF's defense capability and save the defense industry itself from collapse. It is necessary to create interstate corporations for the production of various types of arms, he said, otherwise we could suddenly find ourselves without planes and missiles.

Shaposhnikov did not rule out the possibility of others adhering to the "treaty of the six," including for military-technical reasons.

There is another problem which worries the CIS JAF leadership, Yevgeniy Shaposhnikov said, and that is the lack of coordination in the legislative documents on ensuring the social protection of servicemen. Different rates of pay and pensions are luring officers from one army to another and are a destabilizing factor for military collectives, which benefits no one.

Answering your IZVESTIYA correspondent's question on what concrete measures have been taken in Ukraine to increase the nuclear safety of the missile complexes at Pervomaysk, the marshal said:

"An agreement has been reached on reinstating the supervision of the operation and servicing of the strategic missiles in accordance with the warranties and as specified by the designers and other measures are being adopted. The urgency of the problem has now been reduced somewhat."

Debate on CIS Armed Forces Structure Viewed

PM0203150193 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 2 Mar 93 p 1

[Oleg Falichev report: "Collective Security in the CIS: The NATO or Warsaw Pact Model? Session of the CIS Defense Ministers' Council Has Examined the Possibility of Creating New Defense Structures"]

[Text] The latest conference of CIS states' defense ministers was held at the headquarters of the CIS Joint Armed Forces High Command in Moscow 27 February. Representatives of the Russian Foreign Ministry, the Russian Supreme Soviet Defense and Security Committee, the Russian Supreme Soviet Committee for Interrepublic Relations, and the Russian Supreme Soviet Committee for International Relations were also invited to attend.

What were the questions on the agenda this time? There were three: the coordination of the joint activity of the Commonwealth member states in increasing defense capability and deepening military cooperation; the basic principles and conditions of the performance of military service in the CIS Armed Forces of servicemen of different citizenship; and finally, the further elaboration of draft legislative acts on defense questions and progress in the implementation of interstate agreements on the social and legal protection of servicemen and members of their families. At the proposal of the Russian Defense Ministry the draft agreement "On the Use of Military Satellite Communications Systems and Their Further Improvement" was also submitted for examination.

The fundamental difference between this conference and all its predecessors is that for the first time the people invited to it were the leaders of the military departments of just those republics which have signed the Collective Security Treaty. Let me remind you that they are Armenia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, the Russian Federation, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan. What does this indicate?

Centrifugal forces in a number of republics of the Commonwealth are unfortunately not only not weakening but have recently become the decisive factor in the solution of one political question or another. But the positions and comments of some CIS political leaders are becoming increasingly polarized and nationalist in tone. While distancing themselves from the former motherland some of them are seeking new allies in the West, others in the East...

Perhaps I am wrong, but the present conference of defense ministers is a kind of watershed or a reference point, and no one is going to drag or urge anyone else to go beyond it. For some republics this means even greater consolidation and joint efforts in the organization of collective defense. For others, it means the search for different ways of ensuring national security. As for the position of the CIS Joint Armed Forces High Command, that remains unchanged—the union of states united in the Collective Security Treaty remains open to others.

Now it is time for concrete decisions and real steps by the states is this direction if they do not want to remain in an amorphous state of uncertainty. What might those steps be?

It is a question of a qualitatively new formation and deeper consolidation of the CIS participants in a military organization with a precise responsibility and commitments by the states toward each other. What kind of organization? One modeled on NATO or the Warsaw Pact—especially since these structures were tried and tested long ago, as it were. Which of them should be chosen as the model? Which should be used as a basis in the building of a defense alliance? Unfortunately no consensus on this issue has been reached at the conference so far. In terms of their priorities, the "group of six" divides into two groups.

It has become known that the Russian military delegation, headed by Colonel General B. Gromov, deputy defense minister, and Uzbekistan have spoken in favor, for example, of creating a defense organization of the Warsaw Pact type. The pluses of this are speed in the adoption and execution of decisions, flexible management, and the rigid dependency [zhestkaya determinirovannost] of some participants with regard to others... But in the opinion of Armenia, Kyrgyzstan, and other participants in the conference there were minuses to this as well. What are they? The USSR, for instance, as the "older brother" in the Warsaw Pact Organization, often dictated its terms to the younger ones and made them dependent on various conditions and decisions. Other factors were also mentioned.

Times have changed now. There is and can be no return to the past. But the fear of becoming dependent on a new center and finding oneself under the diktat of some suprastate structure still exists by all accounts. For example, recently I heard a speech by V. Kryzhanovskiy, Ukrainian ambassador extraordinary and plenipotentiary to Russia. Addressing Russian and foreign journalists at the Russian-American Press Center, he called Russia an elephant, a creature it is "dangerous to stand next to." I shall not comment on this. I shall merely express my own opinion that some states of the former USSR clearly should have been given the opportunity long ago to experience complete autonomy in both the military and the economic spheres.

The second group of states—Armenia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan—favored the organization of collective defense along NATO lines. On what grounds? If the CIS Joint Armed Forces High Command is an interstate and not a suprastate military-political organ, they believe. And therefore it will have primarily a coordinating role, which in no way infringes the national sovereignty and independence of the states. The NATO structure is less vulnerable politically and gives no grounds for accusing Russia of imperial aspirations.

Clearly they are also taking into account here the fact that all NATO decisions are made by alliance members on the basis of consensus alone. This means that the voice of even the smallest member country at a NATO forum is equal to that of the largest state.

The people have a saying: It does not matter what color the cat is so long as it catches mice. In my view it does not matter whom or what the CIS' incipient collective security structure resembles most. What is far more important is that it works effectively. For that purpose, clearly, it is necessary to absorb all the best that was contained in the Warsaw Pact Organization and which still exists in the NATO military alliance.

Meanwhile, decisionmaking is a matter for the politicians. What that decision will be we will perhaps learn in a month at the next meeting of heads of states in Yerevan. But for the time being a working group has been created under the leadership of Colonel General V. Samsonov, chief of the CIS Joint Armed Forces General Staff, for the purpose of finding a compromise solution to this dilemma.

Russian Admiral Gromov on Baltic, Black Sea Issues

OW0203025493 Moscow Ostankino Television First Channel and Orbita Networks in Russian 1945 GMT 24 Feb 93

[Studio interview with Admiral Feliks Nikolayevich Gromov, commander in chief of the Russian Navy, by Aleksandr Panov; from the "Utro" program—live]

[Text] [Panov] Defender of the Fatherland Day, which we have just observed, gave us an opportunity to invite the chief of the Russian Navy to be our guest, a first for any of the television programs. So I would like to introduce Admiral Feliks Nikolayevich Gromov, commander in chief of the Russian Navy. Welcome to the Utro program studio.

Feliks Nikolayevich, the Russian Army—rather its leaders—talk about remaining apolitical. Literally a month ago, Marshal Shaposhnikov, commander in chief of the Joint Armed Forces of the Commonwealth, sat where you are sitting and said that the situation in the Army is not simple, that the Army is experiencing in full measure all of the consequences of the actions of politicians. This includes the problem of troop withdrawals, the division of property between states, and social aspects of the lives of servicemen which have become exacerbated as a result. What is the situation like in the fleet, particularly since I know that you have been serving in the fleet for many years? One could say that you have devoted your entire life to naval service and that you rose to the top from the very bottom. In other words you are in a position to assess this situation as it has developed. What is the situation like in the Russian Fleet?

[Gromov] Obviously, if we talk about politics and aspects of all its component parts, one must probably say that our attitude towards politics is as follows: First of all the Armed Forces, and of course the Navy, are weapons in the hands of the state, and I think that we should not take any part in any greater or future politics. I think that the problems that exist...

[Panov, interrupting] Which I mentioned, in fact.

[Gromov] Yes... which we have in our Armed Forces are in fact generally characteristic of the fleet too. Some of the problems, in fact, are caused by a situation in which new states have formed on the basis of the Soviet Union. The troop withdrawal problems, the loss of naval bases, and the need to withdraw naval forces from the Baltic Republics, Georgia, and Azerbaijan are an outcome of this. Of course this is a very serious problem. At the same time I must say that the Russian Navy has come out of this with a minimum of losses, that the main forces of the Russian Navy—the Northern and Pacific fleets—have preserved their positions and preserved their stability, and of course we will be solving all other problems.

[Panov] What is the situation like on the Baltic, where most of our naval bases are being eliminated, and in the

Black Sea, where the politicians in Dagomys were supposed to have agreed to something last July, but where various excesses have taken place lately related once again, as we know, to the partition of the Ukraine and Russia? I think many of our television viewers are interested in these two locations.

[Gromov] I think this is of interest not only to television viewers but to anybody who serves in the Armed Forces, and particularly in the Navy. I would divide this issue into two parts. First, the Baltic area, which is one region and one state of affairs; and the Black Sea, which is another region and another state of affairs.

If we talk about the Baltic region, then there are practically no questions about the political state of affairs and relations between these states and Russia...

[Panov, interrupting] But there are the questions of redeployment, the dismantling of military bases, and relocation of servicemen.

[Gromov] Yes, and in connection with this a categorical question arises, that we must withdraw our forces in a predetermined period of time. We planned to do this by 1994, and presently this decision—in connection with the fact that questions of social conditions in new locations have been solved insufficiently and points for receiving the crews of ships are not yet ready—the implementation of this plan will continue until 1994. Of course this is a serious problem for the withdrawal of ships as well. But most important of all where the Baltic Fleet is concerned is the fact that some 20,000 families must be withdrawn. This is one of the main issues that is holding back this pullout.

The fleet's forces will mainly be based in Kaliningrad Oblast and Leningrad Oblast. This will somewhat complicate the communications and cooperation between these bases, but I think that the entire situation in the Baltic Sea will be under normal control.

The situation in the Black Sea is somewhat different. Here the problem is somewhat different. After all, both Russia and the Ukraine are part of the CIS and, of course, the way the issue is presently being raised by the Ukraine, it should probably not be so categorical. Decisions have been adopted for the Black Sea Fleet putting it under the command of two presidents. Vice Admiral Baltin has been appointed commander by a decision of both presidents. Presently, at the negotiations of the government commissions, everything related to the status of the fleet, up to 1995, the status of the fleet's personnel, and problems of material and technical supply are being discussed.

[Panov] In other words, the process of negotiations is continuing.

[Gromov] Yes, the process of negotiations is continuing and there are several issues involved relating to the fact that we have differences of opinion with the Ukrainian delegation. Of course, here we must find mutually acceptable conditions so that both ships and people are not arbitrarily moved around, but get an opportunity to be based possibly even in the same ports—that is one option. A second element that could be considered, since the Ukraine and Russia are... [pauses] is the element of dual citizenship. For example Russian units with dual citizenship could be located on Ukrainian territory. This would not be such a bad solution considering the difficult situation, including the economic situation, in which both our sides find themselves.

[Panov] Well, Feliks Nikolayevich, the time for our talk is unfortunately coming to an end and I have one last question. In 1996 the Russian Fleet will be observing a glorious anniversary, its 300th founding anniversary. I know that measures devoted to this date have already begun and are ongoing, so my last question concerns the romantic side of the naval profession. What could you say this morning to the young people who are dreaming of linking their destinies with the sea and who may be called up for service in the Navy precisely in 1996?

[Gromov] I think that we will preserve the Navy one way or another and preserve the officer corps, and our Russian people should know that Russia has, and always will have, a fleet.

[Panov] Thank you. Well, on this note let us conclude our morning meeting. I would like to remind our television viewers that the guest in our studio was Admiral Feliks Nikolayevich Gromov, commander in chief of the Russian Navy. I wish you every success.

[Gromov] Thank you, Aleksandr.

ITAR-TASS Carries Press Review for 3 March

LD0303083393 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0624 GMT 3 Mar 93

["Press Review"—ITAR-TASS headline]

[Text] Moscow March 3 ITAR-TASS—The meeting of President Yeltsin with representatives of parties, organisations and parliamentary groups integrated in the Democratic Choice bloc is in the focus of attention of today's press.

NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA carries the full text of Yeltsin's speech at the meeting under the headline "President is ready for resolute actions, if the parliament sticks to its confrontation policy." The newspaper points out that the meeting was regarded by its participants as "the event taking place at one of the most crucial moments in the history of Russian democracy." Yeltsin spoke in favour of concluding a constitutional agreement, holding a referendum on the fundamentals of the new constitution in the country and, if the Congress of People's Deputies due to be held on March 10 rejects them both, for the tough use of his presidential prerogatives, the newspaper stresses.

On the same day in a PRAVDA interview, NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA continues, "the Russian president actually expressed his agreement to cooperation with the moderate-minded communists." ROSSIYSKIYE VESTI sets forth the president's speech, in which he pointed to a possibility of the coming to power of conservative forces through the congress in conditions of the economic, political and constitutional crisis that hit the country, under the headline "Let people make it clear whom they are following." ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA carries a large article about that speech. PRAVDA describes it as a threat to the power of soviets, quoting Yeltsin's words that "we shall not permit their omnipotence."

ROSSIYSKIE VESTI carries an article of its correspondent from Surgut, where a meeting of heads of government and official representatives of 12 former USSR republics ended on Tuesday [2 March]. The article is entitled "Intergovernmental council for oil and gas created." According to the newspaper, the main purpose of its activities is the development of international cooperation in the sphere of oil and gas extraction, transportation, processing and use, as well as the coordination of efforts aimed at stabilising and developing the oil and gas industries in the interests of the council's member states.

KRASNAYA ZVEZDA reports a meeting of Russian Defence Minister Pavel Grachev with Russian journalists, at which he stressed that any attempts to appeal to the armed forces in a political struggle are fraught with most serious consequences.

Reporting the hearings on the START-2 treaty, held at the Russian parliament, newspapers quote its critics as saying that there is no guarantees of the United States changing its military doctrine with regard to Russia as the successor of the Soviet Union.

KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA comments on the speech of Kyrgyz President Askar Akayev before representatives of political parties of the country, from which it follows that he rejects both capitalist and socialist ways of development. The president said that "we are going to choose a different path." It is not clear, however, what he means, the newspaper notes.

PRAVDA publishes an interview with the first president of Ingushetia Ruslan Aushev. He said that presidents of both large and small states should live with a feeling of guilt before their nations, otherwise they "will always think about themselves, not about the people."

Russia To Join Airdrop Relief Effort Over Bosnia

LD0203135793 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1230 GMT 2 Mar 93

[Text] Moscow, 2 Mar (ITAR-TASS)—The Russian Federation Ministry of Foreign Affairs released the following statement today: "Talks on a settlement of the conflict on the territory of former Yugoslavia have entered a decisive phase. In the Russian side's opinion, the key to success is the earliest adoption and implementation of the Vance-Owen plan. For this purpose Russia has put forward a specific eight-point initiative, which has met with the broad support of the international community, including the sides involved directly in the conflict.

"Russian Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev's telephone conversation with U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher yesterday also was devoted to advancing the talks in New York on a Bosnian settlement. It was agreed, in particular, to boost cooperation in New York between the representatives of Russia and the United States in support of the Vance-Owen plan.

"The talks are not going smoothly, and for their success it is necessary to create a favorable political background, above all on the territory of former Yugoslavia itself. The civilians—Serbs, Croats, and Muslims—are suffering great deprivations, being in the epicenter of bloody fighting. They are being given humanitarian aid under UN auspices. Russia also is taking a direct part in this process.

"Unfortunately, it is not yet perceived as possible to deliver humanitarian aid to some areas by land alone. In these conditions a number of countries, in particular the United States, have made the decision to deliver this aid by air. Russia also will make its contribution to this purely humanitarian action being carried out under UN auspices.

"With regard to this we consider the safety of the flights to be paramount, taking into consideration the clear obligations undertaken by all the sides involved in the conflict not to cause any obstruction to the delivery of humanitarian aid also by air. These obligations, as the first successful flights by U.S. planes show, are being adhered to strictly.

"As regards the albeit very limited financial expenditure which Russia is undertaking, in creating favorable conditions for a peace settlement, we are calculating that it will be taken into account and in some measure compensated for by the United Nations and the other countries providing humanitarian aid to the long-suffering peoples of former Yugoslavia."

State Commission To Execute Airdrops

OW0203171193 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1637 GMT 2 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Russian transport planes which will help make humanitarian aid airdrops to Bosnia and Hercegovina will be based at an airfield in the German city of Frankfurt am Main. Interfax learned this from the press center of the State Committee on Emergency Situations (SCES), which the Russian government commissioned to administer the airdrops. The details of the operation will be announced Tuesday in Moscow at negotiations between representatives of the SCES and the U.S. Embassy in Russia.

Earlier the Russian Foreign Ministry distributed an announcement stating that Russia "will make its contribution to the purely humanitarian act" as long as the safety of the pilots was assured. Moscow thinks the UN and other countries will "to a certain extent" compensate for the expenses of the mission.

Clinton Welcomes Russia's Help in Bosnian Airdrop

LD0303085893 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0819 GMT 3 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Pavel Vanichkin]

[Text] Washington March 3 TASS—U.S. President Bill Clinton welcomed Russia's announced participation in the Bosnian air drop as an example of international cooperation in the post-cold war era.

President Clinton issued a statement, circulated on Tuesday [2 March], calling the Russian announcement "an important decision."

"This Russian assistance significantly enhances the efforts of the international community to ensure adequate relief supplies reach the beleaguered population, both by air and by land," the statement said.

The decision "underscores the importance of close U.S.-Russian cooperation in opposing the brutality and inhumanity occurring in the former Yugoslavian region," the president pointed out, adding that the move also patently shows the fruits of a strong partnership between Russia and the U.S.

Bosnia Airdrop Seen as Possible Prelude to Military Action

PM0303115993 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 3 Mar 93 p 3

[Vladimir Potapov "Rejoinder" under general heading: "Gifts From Sky. But They Missed Target"]

[Text] President Clinton's first major foreign policy initiative, as the operation to drop goods by parachute for Bosnian Muslims has been christened, has manifestly failed. There have been no reports that the food reached its destination.

The situation is not even saved by the U.S. Defense Department's cheerful reports of the successful return of the Hercules. (As though someone was intending to shoot them down). Official Washington comments with restraint: "Some of the goods reached their target." Television and radio commentators from France, Britain, and Germany are more categorical. "The Muslim population for which the aid was intended," the BBC reported, for example, "has not received it." The containers were... blown off course.

There is more to come. International Islamic organizations have voiced their indignation at the fact that the parachuted food included cans of pork. It is not enough that this food is not for Muslims, but it is also being served up during the Islamic fast of Ramadan!

In terms of their clumsiness the nighttime raids by aircraft of the U.S. Air Force bring to mind the affair many years ago when foreign tourists scattered chewing gum about during a hockey match between youth teams from the USSR and Canada in Sokolniki. That time the "lip-smacking handouts" caused a crush. History could repeat itself in Bosnia—what if clashes suddenly break out between armed detachments over the division of the really essential food and medicines that have fallen from the sky? If, of course, they find them.

For the umpteenth time a perplexed world is asking itself this question: Why was it necessary to organize the dropping of containers from a height of 4 km when aid can be delivered safely overland? There is a suspicion that the present "gifts" for Bosnians in the hands of Washington intriguers could become "Greek gifts." After the example of Somalia. The analogy literally suggests itself. And there will be a pretext: If military air transport cannot ensure the delivery of goods, then it is necessary to do this with the help of large troop units on the ground. And even to send containers in rockets....

Grachev Denies Russians Supplying Arms to Serbs, Croats

LD0303131393 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1225 GMT 3 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Andrey Naryshkin]

[Text] Moscow March 3 TASS—Russian Defence Army General Pavel Grachev today rejected the report published by the British newspaper THE TIMES alleging that Russia is involved in supplying weapons to Serbs and Croats.

Responding to a question from ITAR-TASS, Pavel Grachev said "we did not and are not supplying arms and military equipment to former Yugoslavia, and no such supplies are forthcoming. This matter is not discussed either by the government or the National Security Council".

As concerns Russian participation in airdrops on the territory of Bosnia and Hercegovina, plans for this are being studied, according to the defence minister. The ministry is studying the possibility of using Russian military transport aircraft to transport medicines and food and drop them by parachute in some regions of the former Yugoslavia, Grachev said.

Possible Serbian Role in New York Bombing Pondered

MK0203132093 Moscow NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA in Russian 2 Mar 93 p 1

[By Aleksandr Anin]

[Excerpts] Just as the Challenger crash over Cape Canaveral on 28 January 1986 dispelled the myth of the United States as a faultless technological power, the explosion last Friday at the World Trade Center in Manhattan showed that the territorial invulnerability of the United States, which had been made a matter of national pride, is more a U.S. dream than a U.S. reality. It is not only and not so much the scale of the tragedy that matters (casualties could have been many times higher, or none at all) but the fact that, as it turned out, no one was able to stop the person who was so eager to set off a bomb right in downtown New York and kill five completely innocent Americans.

The range of official suspects in this act is wide, ranging from a lone lunatic to the Serbs. The latter version appears the most plausible, especially in the context of well-known developments and given the fact that Serbian nationalists were among the first to claim responsibility for the attack (apart from anything else, this is one of the FBI's theories). Thus, the Serb factor could well be accepted as the basis for a working hypothesis.

So it has happened that a country with a nearly perfect air and space defense system, a country where the functional coefficient of national security has been raised to a level unattainable for others, a country onto which no bomb has ever been dropped, wherever its troops may have fought, owing to its geographical remoteness from traditional war theaters—that country in the end has proved defenseless confronted with a simple terrorist attack, which has always been considered an unfailing weapon of the weak just because of its simplicity.

Indeed, "the Serbian avengers"—if it really was them—are capable neither of sending an aircraft carrier to California shores, nor of landing their marines in Florida, nor striking the White House from the air. That is to say, they would have been happy to do all these things—the first, the second, and the third, but... As a result, those who needed to act acted within their capabilities, and it is quite possible that those who did it in New York have already made plans regarding Berlin, Paris, London, Moscow, and so forth. [passage omitted]

If we take the "Serbian connection" as a working theory, the ethnic-political tinge of the "Manhattan incident" is as undoubted as the Belgrade authorities' involvement in the case is highly unlikely. In this event, if the situation in and, most importantly, around the former Yugoslavia remains unchanged in its current characteristics for some time (let alone if it acquires a more distinct anti-Serbian bent), we can rest assured that the established big shots of international confession-based or ethnic nonstate terrorism (the Armenian ASALA, the Turkish Gray Wolves, etc., will soon be joined by the Serbian Defenders of the Fatherland, or whatever they are calling themselves over there at the time.

P.S. The official U.S. doctrine with regard to Communist macro- and microempires has been distinguished by a certain directness in most recent times along the lines of "Carthage must be destroyed." More cautious (primarily West European) political experts, who could foresee the tempestuous unfolding of Gorbachev's reformation, came come up with another version: "Carthage must be dismantled." But the fact is that they helped it precisely to collapse. The latest paroxysm of assistance—an unabashed recognition by the community of nations of the rebellious subjects of the Yugoslav federation—is echoed in the Manhattan explosion.

Right now it is the custom to try to frighten the world (and in the first place the United States as guarantor of world order) with suggestions as to what types of explosives will be detonated, and where, if an endgame a la Yugoslavia is played out on the territory of the former USSR. It seems that after Manhattan Friday there is no need to try to frighten anybody. At least (and perhaps) the United States has enough of that.

Clinton Expression of Support for Yeltsin Evaluated

PM0203160393 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 2 Mar 93 p 3

[Yuriy Glukhov "View From Editorial Office": "Meeting Following Emergency Signal"]

[Text] The report on the meeting of the two presidents—of the United States and Russia—scheduled for 4 April was not a sensation in the world press. Interest in it vanished the very next day. This is evidently how it should be. Meetings of leaders, like permanent top-level working contacts, are an indispensable attribute and one of the main indicators of the normal development of relations between countries. And if the future Russian-U.S. talks had not in advance been painted in certain tones....

First, not sparing our pride, the Americans focus attention on the fact that Moscow solicited the meeting. "At a time when Yeltsin is struggling to hang on to power in the Kremlin, the Russian appeal to the United States was candid: We need a summit meeting, please demonstrate support for us as quickly as possible," a CBS-TV correspondent reported from the Russian capital. On the same topic it was pointed out that the Russian president's popularity is "evaporating as the economy and exports decline and inflation grows." It was in this situation that the SOS signal was sent from Moscow.

So, against a background of disastrous failures inside the country the Russian leadership, in the opinion of international observers, needed at least some foreign policy success. M. Gorbachev repeatedly used the same method quite recently. But his experience showed that a demonstration of clout abroad does not compensate for a loss of authority with one's own people.

Meanwhile, the United States has clearly been in no hurry. B. Clinton found time to receive many visitors after his inauguration, even at ministerial level, before the Russian leader found his way onto the list.

Probably the White House would still be in no hurry if it were not for an incident which occurred in Washington itself. The French newspaper LIBERATION points out that R. Armitage, an adviser to the U.S. Department of State, was fired recently because he said in public something that many people in Washington think to themselves, namely: Maybe Yeltsin's days in power are already numbered.

The Moor, i.e. Armitage, has done his duty, let him go [reference to Schiller]. Realizing the seriousness of the situation, Clinton issued a reassuringly inspiring statement: "President Yeltsin is not paralyzed by what is happening. I fully support him, his role, and what he is trying to do." According to CBS, the summit meeting will also serve to demonstrate support for "the Kremlin leader, who finds himself under very severe critical fire."

Will it really benefit B. Yeltsin?—this is the question. The Americans are too pragmatic. They associate the resolution of a number of major foreign policy tasks with the future meeting and the preparations for it. It is a question of implementing the START II Treaty, of involving Russia in U.S. and NATO operations in Yugoslavia, and of Moscow using its levers of influence over the Palestinians and the PLO in order to get them back to the talks on a Near East settlement. (The Palestinian delegation is refusing to participate in them until Israel fulfills the UN Security Council resolution on the return of the deported Palestinians).

As is known, the Russian public does not share in many respects the official viewpoint on these problems. The Americans would like to use the Russian president's weight to crush this opposition. In the final analysis, they can only expose him to danger by pushing him into foreign policy steps that are unpopular on the domestic plane.

It is perfectly possible that these steps will be entirely unilateral. The West already duped the CIS countries last year, by promising $24 billion. Its receipt is still problematic.

There is still endless discussion of the fact that the Russian president is on the point of receiving an invitation to the upcoming conference in Japan of the seven most developed countries in the world. But all this resembles a handout of candy wrappers. "The West certainly is not a rich and generous idiot," Britain's THE

FINANCIAL TIMES writes. Foreign investors, the newspaper continues, are complaining of difficulties and closing down their offices in Russia under conditions where their hopes of stability in this country are vanishing and when they are increasingly frequently encountering the inability of joint ventures to do business and their inertia of these joint ventures.

Given the increasing rejection of a policy inside the country, however, external support has always done any national leader a disservice. Particularly support which goes no further than verbal promises.

Christopher's Attitude to Russia Viewed

PM0303103193 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 2 Mar 93 First Edition p 7

[Article by Vitaliy Trifonov: "Warren Christopher—'Model Diplomat...' of the Background"]

[Excerpts] ...He tries to avoid the foreground, obviously preferring the background. So it seems as though it would have been said of him in ancient times: He works more than everyone but says less about himself than the others. Appointed secretary of state by U.S. President Bill Clinton, Warren Christopher could by rights boast of the heaps of praise he has earned. But Christopher refuses himself that right. The man is so made that one can hardly expect verbal pyrotechnics from him as one could from his predecessors—Henry Kissinger or Zbigniew Brzezinski, who liked to show off and "play to their audience." Christopher lacks any inclination to pose but has plenty of modesty and, of course, ability. "A model diplomat" is how he is spoken of.

Christopher's calm and moderate style has won him universal respect and wide renown. Clinton himself, noting that not one of his acquaintances has "more sanity or more experience in this field," called him a man who weighs up his words and arguments very carefully. [passage omitted]

While working in the State Department he engaged mainly in policy in the field of human rights and led the international commission which observed the situation regarding these rights in foreign countries. Christopher won particular credit for his role as the main participants in the talks when concluding treaties on the Panama Canal. He also coped very well with the talks on the release of the 52 U.S. hostages in Iran in 1981.

In the same year Christopher left state service and returned to the legal firm of O'Melveny and Myers in Los Angeles, which he has headed throughout the past 11 years.

Clinton, at the time yet to be president, noticed Christopher's successes. Such close relations of trust formed between the two that the Arkansas governor asked Christopher to head the group which was to examine the list of possible candidates for the post of vice president. As a result the voice fell on Tennessee Senator Albert Gore. Moreover, Christopher headed Clinton's team in the so-called transitional period, when the outgoing administration hands over its affairs to the incoming administration. THE NEW YORK TIMES once quoted Bruce Nelson, a former representative of Christopher's during the investigation into Los Angeles police brutality, who said: "Christopher is not a man who makes deals and manipulates people. He does not talk, he acts... I would entrust any secret to him. Clinton knows that Christopher will not let him down." The new White House incumbent himself has expressed himself as follows on this score: "I have grown accustomed to relying on his opinion... He is a friend who will be nearby."

The latter remark, it is true, was taken by some specialists "with a grain of salt," as the Americans say, that is with some skepticism. The appointment of a brilliant executive like Christopher to the post of secretary of state, according to current opinion, attests rather to the fact that Clinton is disinclined to regard the foreign policy department as some generator of ideas when forming a new political course and sees in it merely a pursuing of his own line. But in my opinion it is still too early to say that.

Just as it is premature to try to predict the State Department's position in relations with Russia. Those years, the years of Christopher's work in Washington and of the existence of the USSR, are not, I think, indicative. The situation now has changed dramatically although unless I am wrong in that period Christopher was distinguished by the restraint and balance of his statements. At any rate his first statements put one in a positive frame of mind.

Thus, addressing the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Christopher said that Russian-U.S. relations should be given priority in U.S. foreign policy activity. There is nothing more important, he stressed, than rendering aid to Russia in demilitarization, privatization, the consolidation of the economy, and the development of its political institutions. Russian economic and political reforms, in his opinion, are America's main hope of reducing the still enormous nuclear arsenal and conventional arms in Russia and other states which have arisen on the ruins of the Soviet Union, which in turn will enable Washington to reduce expenditure on defense.

Christopher is convinced that the collapse of the Russian economy could fatally discredit democracy not only in the eyes of the Russians but also in the eyes of their neighbors. The Clinton administration, he said, will join the efforts of the "G-7" states in increasing aid for economic reforms in Russia.

Of course, so far this all sounds very vague. But at the present stage we should not expect anything else. The new U.S. administration has only just occupied the government offices in Washington.

But in any case my attention was drawn by Christopher's words to the effect that foreign and domestic policy should "be engaged in simultaneously, not first one and then the other." I believe that as a whole they repeat President Clinton's main thesis, which he has frequently voiced. The thesis according to which the emphasis must be on America's domestic economic problems so that it can remain strong in the international arena. That will to a certain extent influence Washington's approach toward relations with Moscow. That is, as former U.S. President J. Carter stressed during a recent visit to Moscow, the substantial expansion of U.S. aid is scarcely a "threat" to us.

On the other hand, the factor of the unpredictability of Russia's development will obviously have even greater influence on the dynamics of Russian-U.S. collaboration. It is not for me to say that we are trying rapidly to bid farewell to the legacy of over 1,000 years of absolutism and to create essentially from nothing the institutions, traditions, and political culture inherent in the rule of law and a government elected by the people. That transition—a painful transition—from totalitarianism toward democracy, from an economic based on edicts to the market—and the period of bidding farewell to a multinational empire will probably come up against "underwater reefs." And that in turn could be a headache for Clinton and Christopher since the growth of our cataclysms could deprive America of dividends from the end of the cold war and introduce to the world the dangerous factor of political extremism.

What is all this about, you ask. It is about the fact that Washington, like the West as a whole, has a large stake in ensuring that we advance along the democratic path we have chosen ourselves. I do not doubt that a very experienced diplomat like Warren Christopher is very well aware that we and we alone can help ourselves, ensuring the stabilization of power and the effective collaboration of all three of its branches—legislative, executive, and legal. On that plane the United States' consistent, coordinated, and more resolute aid in the reconstruction of the critical Russian economy, not a mere increase in direct monetary injections which could disappear like water in the sand, could be of assistance. But it cannot play a decisive role...

Warren Christopher has frequently demonstrated an enviable perspicacity. His high degree of professionalism, patience, and prudence give grounds for hoping that Russia and the United States will be partners, stable partners. After all, we are no longer rivals....

Change in U.S. Nuclear Targeting Policy Noted

PM0203144393 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 27 Feb 93 p 2

[Mikhail Pogorelyy report: "Whole World Targeted"]

[Text] It has just been learned that the Iraqi leadership expected a nuclear missile strike against Iraq during Operation "Desert Storm." Nevertheless, this scenario was probably unlikely at that time. After all, as the American press indicates, U.S. missiles are still targeted on the former Soviet republics. But it looks as if in the near future Iraq, Libya, and a number of other states may well be targeted by the American intercontinental ballistic missiles.

Such a conclusion can be drawn from a statement by General Lee Butler, commander of the U.S. Armed Forces Strategic Command. "We are now concentrating our attention not only on the former Soviet Union," he said, "but on any potentially hostile country which possesses or is trying to obtain weapons of mass destruction." According to a Pentagon report published the other day, this includes Brazil, India, Italy, Israel, Germany, and Japan. They are all friendly to the United States today, but, Washington believes, the situation may change and it is necessary to be prepared in good time for this.

General Butler reported that the Americans do not intend to constantly keep their sights on the whole world, not even on those "hot spots" which are potentially most serious. It is a question of producing computer models in the Pentagon which will permit retargeting of nuclear missiles on new targets within 48 hours. In the opinion of American strategists, this is also called on to play a deterrent role with regard to regimes which Washington says pursue "terrorist policies."

Yeltsin, Kozyrev Meet With French Foreign Minister

LD0203203793 Moscow Ostankino Television First Channel Network in Russian 1800 GMT 2 Mar 93

[Vladimir Beletskiy report; from the "Novosti" newscast]

[Text] In Moscow today Russian President Boris Yeltsin dealt not just with domestic problems, but also with international affairs. He had a conversation with French Foreign Minister Roland Dumas.

[Beletskiy] The Russian president and the French diplomat spent about an hour discussing various aspects of relations between our countries, European integration issues, and the situation in the former Yugoslavia. The examination of these problems is expected to be continued during French President Francois Mitterand's visit to Russia which is planned for mid-March.

The talks between Roland Dumas and Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev, which were held today, showed that Moscow and Paris intend to develop historically based allied relations and to use their authority to settle conflicts, particularly in the former Yugoslavia. The leaders of the French and Russian foreign political departments are proceeding from the need for a speedy adoption of the Vance-Owen plan.

In the meantime, Andrey Kozyrev reported in a conversation with journalists that Russia is ready to take part in the airdrop of humanitarian aid to the former Yugoslavia on the condition that safety is ensured by all interested parties.

Andrey Kozyrev and Roland Dumas spoke in favor of a peaceful settlement of another tragic conflict: in Nagorno-Karabakh. In a joint statement on this issue, the ministers appealed to both sides urgently to cease missile and artillery shelling, as well as air bombardments, which primarily affect civilians.

Ministers Sign Protocol; Mitterrand To Visit 16 Mar

LD0303112793 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1104 GMT 3 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS diplomatic correspondent Leonid Timofeyev]

[Text] Moscow March 3 TASS—Negotiations of Russian Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev and his French counterpart Roland Dumas have ended here with the signing of a protocol on the exchange of instruments of ratification on entering into force of the Russian- French Treaty of February 7, 1992, and a joint statement on Nagorno-Karabakh.

The Russian foreign minister told correspondents the sides have thus completed the legal registration of new relations between Moscow and Paris. In the words of Roland Dumas, the Russian-French privileged relations serve to the upkeep of balance in the world. He stated the closeness of the sides' points of view on all discussed issues.

In addition to Nagorno-Karabakh, the foreign ministers discussed the situation in former Yugoslavia. Speaking to correspondents, Kozyrev stressed it is necessary "to send a powerful signal to the sides to New York negotiations" and do not miss a chance of adopting the Vance-Owen plan. Otherwise, to his mind, there will be another coil of bloodshed in Yugoslavia instead of peace-making efforts.

The Russian minister praised the French stand in support of the Vance-Owen plan and said Russia is ready to participate in U.N. operations with the use of possibilities of specific states, NATO infrastructures, the Western European Union and other international organizations.

Kozyrev told correspondents President Boris Yeltsin has issued an instruction to elaborate an operation for the air delivery of humanitarian cargo to the Yugoslav conflict zone same as the Americans do. The operation may begin right after the Russian State Committee for Emergency Situations elaborates technical details and solve safety issues, he said.

Kozyrev described as normal the proposed use of airfields on NATO countries' territory for these purposes. In his words, the allocation of humanitarian cargo by one countries, planes by others, and airfields by third would be a real help of the international community.

The negotiations also discussed preparations for a Moscow visit of French President Francois Mitterrand. Representatives of the Russian delegation told ITAR-TASS the visit will be held on March 16.

Kozyrev Announces Plans for Bosnian Airdrop

LD0203202993 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1621 GMT 2 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS diplomatic correspondent Leonid Timofeyev]

[Text] Moscow, 2 Mar—The talks in Moscow between the foreign ministers of Russia and France, Andrey Kozyrev and Roland Dumas, have ended with the signing of a protocol on the exchange of ratification documents on the implementation of the treaty between Russia and France of 7 February 1992 and a joint statement on Nagorno-Karabakh.

Speaking to journalists, the Russian minister pointed out that this completed the process of contractual formalities on the new relations between Moscow and Paris. Roland Dumas said that Russo- French privileged relations served the cause of supporting equilibrium in the world. He noted the closeness of the points of view of the sides on all the questions which had been discussed today.

Apart from Nagorno-Karabakh, the heads of the foreign policy departments of the two countries also discussed the situation in Yugoslavia. Replying to journalists' questions, Andrey Kozyrev stressed that it is necessary "to send a strong signal to the sides taking part in the talks in New York," and not to miss the chance of adopting the Vance-Owen plan. Otherwise, in his opinion, instead of peacemaking efforts there will be a fresh bloodshed in Yugoslavia. The Russian minister highly appraised France's position in support of the Vance-Owen plan and stated that Russia is ready to take part in UN operations using the potentials of individual states, infrastructures of NATO, and those of the West European Union and other international organizations.

Andrey Kozyrev informed the journalists that President Boris Yeltsin had given instructions to work out an operation to supply humanitarian freight to the area of the Yugoslav conflict by aerial means, as the Americans are doing. This operation, the minister said, could begin immediately after the Russian State Committee for Emergency Situations works out the technical details and issues of safety are resolved. He said the envisaged use of air fields on the territory of NATO countries for these purposes is normal. The provision of humanitarian freight by some countries, of planes by others, and of air fields by third countries would be genuine aid from the international community, he said.

In the course of the talks the two ministers also discussed questions connected with preparations for the visit to Moscow of President Francois Mitterrand of the French Republic. The representatives of the Russian delegation confirmed to the ITAR-TASS correspondent that this visit will take place on 16 March.

Fedorov Assures Dumas Reform Policy To Continue

OW0203193493 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1903 GMT 2 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Russian Deputy Prime Minister Boris Fedorov said the policy of economic reform will be continued. He told French Foreign Minister Roland Dumas, who arrived in Moscow on Tuesday [2 March], that the plan of measures for 1993 recently approved by the government was aimed at "the development and continuation of the reforms whose implementation was started last year."

Yeltsin-Kohl Meeting on Schedule Despite 'Doubts'

OW0203153793 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1454 GMT 2 Mar 93

[Report by diplomatic correspondents Andrey Borodin, Dmitriy Voskoboynikov and Igor Porshnev; from the "Diplomatic Panorama" feature—following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Russia's Foreign Ministry has not been officially informed by the German side that the brief working meeting between President Boris Yeltsin and Chancellor Helmut Kohl scheduled for March 3 might fail to take place," a highranking Russian diplomat told Interfax. According to him, Moscow proceeds from the assumption that the proposed meeting between the leaders of the two countries will be held, and preparations for it are "intensive."

An Interfax correspondent also interviewed the Press Attache of the German embassy in Moscow, Enno Barker, who said that the German side has no doubts that the proposed meeting between Kohl and Yeltsin will take place.

The doubts emerged when news agencies had quoted a spokesman for the Bonn administration as saying he is not sure that Helmut Kohl will be able to see Boris Yeltsin during his stop in Moscow on his way from Seoul to Germany.

German Embassy Blames 'Russian Bureaucracy' for Visa Delays

PM0203150793 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 25 Feb 93 p 2

[Sergey Guk report: "Waiting Lines for German Visas Remain"]

[Text] The lines of people waiting for visas outside the German Consulate General are hardly going to diminish in the near future. The reason is the increased number of people leaving Russia and the staff shortage at the German diplomatic mission, even though the number of staffers there has tripled in the past two-and-a-half years to almost 100 people now.

Reinhard Ludwig, director of the FRG Embassy's Consular Department in Moscow, told me about this. The Foreign Ministry in Bonn, like other German state institutions, is now strapped for cash: The government, concerned at the economic problems of the former GDR, has imposed a tough austerity program.

Each month around 25,000 business, commercial, and tourist visas are issued to our compatriots for entry into Germany (not counting the 20,000 Russian Germans migrating to their historic homeland). The overwhelming majority have their applications processed through the consular administration of the Russian Foreign Ministry or through state organizations authorized to sell travel documents directly—there are now 50 of them in Russia.

People whose stay in Germany does not exceed three months obtain their visa within two days. If red tape, delays, and snags are occurring they are not at his institution, the consul general stated, they are on the conscience of Russian bureaucracy. The fate of people who want to travel for longer is settled not by the consulate but by the authorities in the Germans Laender. Some Laender given an answer within four weeks, but answers from others can take months. The diplomats in Moscow cannot influence this process. Matters can be expedited only by the German partners of those seeking exit visas (they do have partners) who must petititon locally on their protege's behalf.

But the people languishing in the waiting lines outside the FRG Consulate General in Moscow are those who do not have the backup of state organizations and who are applying for a visa in person. They make up a small percentage of the total number of people who want to leave the country, but they somewhat mar the strict institution's visual image. Furthermore, there are cunning mafia people operating in their ranks, trying to cultivate their manners and swindle credulous people with bogus promises that they can expedite the issue of their visas. Forged invitations from Germany are another problem—an investigation revealed that about one in 10 was forged. What awaits those who are caught with a forgery? Herr Ludwig thought the expression "blacklisting" undiplomatic, but confirmed that the surnames of bogus invitees are placed on a computer register in the "undesirable persons" section.

Talks With Georgia on Abkhazia End

LD0203172893 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1628 GMT 2 Feb 93

[By ITAR-TASS diplomatic correspondent Boris Krivoshey]

[Text] Moscow, 2 Mar (ITAR-TASS)—Russian-Georgian consultations took place in Russia's Foreign Ministry from 26 February to 1 March regarding questions of settling the conflict in Abkhazia; the meetings participants expressed interest in a most rapid end to bloodshed and a solution to the conflict by political means. This is stated in a Russian Foreign Ministry statement circulated today. The Georgian side, points out the statement, agreed with Russia's proposal that by way of a first step, the sides taking part in the conflict should ensure a cease-fire in the area of the Gumista River for the period of time necessary to evacuate the equipment at the seismic station in Eshery and the withdrawal from there of a Russian military subunit. Agreement was reached that in the next few days the sides will exchange concrete proposals on a plan to stop the armed conflict.

Participants in the consultations also agreed that for a rapid and effective investigation of extraordinary situations and complications arising in the zone of conflict it is essential to create a mechanism for keeping each other informed and for operative reaction, with the participation of representatives of Foreign Ministries of Russia and Georgia, Defense Ministries, and bodies for the protection of human rights and national minorities.

Grachev Rebuts Attempts To Politicize Abkhazia Visit

PM0203161393 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 2 Mar 93 pp 1,3

[Vladimir Gavrilenko report: "Russian Defense Minister Visits Abkhazia and Adzharia"]

[Text] After touring the North Caucasus Military District at the end of February, Army General Pavel Grachev, Russian defense minister, visited the operational grouping of Russian troops in Abkhazia and units of the Group of Russian Forces in the Transcaucasus stationed in Adzharia. Answering questions from journalists and participants in the Russian TV program "Without Retouching" on the eve of the trip, Pavel Grachev stressed that Russia has had and will have its own strategic interests in this region. The statement of this obvious fact in a political broadcast on television was undoubtedly nothing extraordinary because it reflected the Russian leadership's official viewpoint and continued the historical tradition of Russia's involvement in the fate of the Caucasus.

Nevertheless, Pavel Grachev's comment provoked a stormy reaction from the Georgian leadership and there were categorical demands for the Russian troops' withdrawal from Abkhazia. The general atmosphere surrounding the Russian Armed Forces' subunits in Georgia has become acute, which was why the Russian Foreign Ministry issued the well known statement which our newspaper published on Saturday. Against the background of these events an unsavory fuss has been created over the Russian defense minister's visit to Gudauta and Batumi. Eduard Shevardnadze, head of the Georgian leadership, expressed bewilderment that Pavel Grachev did not visit Tbilisi, where Shevardnadze apparently wanted to hear the Russian defense minister's explanations about his television comments.

It is difficult not to see political chicanery here: Eduard Amvrosiyevich is an experienced politician and former head of a great state's Foreign Ministry who of course cannot fail to understand that Russia has had and always will have geopolitical and strategic interests on its southern borders, and this cannot be a surprise to Russia's neighbors in this region. Especially since there are talks in progress between Russia and Georgia, even if they are proceeding with difficulty, where the status of the Russian troops in the republic is by no means of least significance. The Abkhaz conflict is another question and the Russian troops were next to and almost at the center of the events there. Here the Russian defense minister stated with the utmost precision that the troops' position has been and remains one of noninvolvement in the conflict although if they come under attack or military pressure they reserve the right to take resolute countermeasures.

In Gudauta Pavel Grachev was forced to repeat (for the umpteenth time!) that his visit was in the nature of a military inspection and pursues no political aims. This question also cropped up in Batumi, where Pavel Grachev was visiting an administration and units of a motorized rifle division and heard a report from its commander, Major General Sergey Kuzhilin. The political and military situation in Georgia is affecting the life of the Russian troops in this region, of course. Unlike other regions of Georgia, however, the situation here is much better, due in no small measure to the Ajaria Supreme Soviet, whose chairman, Arslan Abashidze, attended the Russian minister's meeting and conversations with officers, NCOs, and men from the division.

The Russian troop subunits in Ajaria have some difficult problems. The question of recruiting fixed-service personnel to the division is acute, and this is affecting the division's combat and mobilizational potential and continued viability. There are problems with material and technical supply, financial provision, and everyday living arrangements, and travel by officers and NCOs and their families to Russia. Nevertheless, there is deep respect for the courage and loyalty to duty of the Russian officers and men who are ready and are continuing to perform their difficult service here far from home.

In a special statement for the press, Army General Pavel Grachev reaffirmed quite clearly that his trip to Abkhazia and Ajaria is purely intradepartmental in character, is connected only with the problems of the Russian troops' presence in this region, and has no political connotations, as some representatives of the mass media, in both Russia and Georgia, have hastened to state.

Further on Georgia Visit, Ukraine Talks

LD0203223393 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 1700 GMT 2 Mar 93

[By correspondent S. Sokolova on news conference given by Russian Defense Minister Pavel Grachev on 2 March, including recording of segments of Grachev remarks; place not given; from the "Vesti" newscast]

[Text] [Announcer] Yesterday a correspondent's report from Georgia contained Eduard Shevardnadze's statement to the effect that, following the Russian defense minister's visit to Gudauta and Batumi and his totally ill-considered statements, the situation in the republic had suddenly become more difficult.

[Grachev] I don't think, you understand, that the arrival of the defense minister among Russian military units made the situation in that region more difficult just like that. It's a commonplace, low-grade, perhaps, political statement, if that's what it actually said.

[Sokolova] At a meeting with journalists today, Pavel Grachev rejected Eduard Shevardnadze's statement in the following manner:

[Grachev] Twenty-four hours before my trip to this region, Mr. Shevardnadze was informed that I was making an inspection trip to precisely this region.

[Sokolova] In Pavel Grachev's view, the North Caucasus Military District is one of the main districts capable in the future of withstanding an attack on Russia from the south.

Grachev also announced that, at the second round of Russo- Ukrainian talks, which began today, the question of monitoring [kontrol] strategic offensive weapons on the territory of the Ukraine may not have been resolved, and, if confrontations arise between Russia and the Ukraine, then, according to Grachev, he has already prepared a draft statement that he will issue three to four days after the end of the talks.

Rutskoy Views Ties With Malaysia, Assails Western Aid

LD0203171693 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1530 GMT 2 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Aleksandr Bokhonko]

[Text] Kuala Lumpur, 2 Mar (ITAR-TASS)—There is great scope for the development of mutually advantageous economic cooperation between Russia and Malaysia and the establishment of joint ventures. Russian Vice President Aleksandr Rutskoy, who is on an official visit to Malaysia, said this at a news conference here today. As examples of such cooperation, he cited the possibility of concluding a deal on the sale of a consignment of MiG-29 fighters and a large quantity of civilian equipment to Malaysia, as well as the establishment of joint ventures in the aerospace industry. A. Rutskoy said that his talks with Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad were "very cordial."

Referring to the sale of MiG's to Malaysia, the vice president disclosed that Russia is prepared to set up a technical center in Malaysia which would service the planes, manufacture spare parts for them, and train engineers, technicians, and pilots. As part payment for the deal Russia is willing to accept fabrics, palm oil, and other commodities from Malaysia. "Russia is offering Malaysia not just MiG's, but also a large range of civilian equipment, transport aircraft and helicopters, modern ships, trucks, telecommunications satellites, and cooperation in the communications field," A. Rutskoy said. He added that Malaysia has expressed interest in such cooperation, although further work needs to be done on many questions.

Responding to journalists' questions, the vice president criticized financial assistance to Russia from Western countries. "All it amounts to is the following: Russia is being told that if it behaves well, the West will not stop promising the $24 billion which it first promised ages ago." According to Rutskoy, Russia ought to rely on its own resources.

Moscow Fails To Clinch MiG Deal With Malaysia

OW0203194193 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1903 GMT 2 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] At their meeting in Kuala Lumpur, the Malaysian capital, on Tuesday [2 March] Vice-President Aleksandr Rutskoy of Russia and Prime-Minister Makathir Mohamad of Malaysia failed to reach agreement on sales of Russian Mig-29 fighter planes to Malaysia, even though Malaysia was offered highly favorable conditions. At a meeting with journalists Rutskoy noted that Russia understood Malaysia's unwillingness to hurry because buying the jets would signify change of partners. What is more, the size of the deal is such that premature decisions are out of the question. Rutskoy also said that at his meeting with the Malaysian prime- minister he made "numerous new proposals on this and other contracts." According to the Malaysian press service spokesman, Mohamad expressed interest in the proposals and intended to study them. "Russia is prepared to start implementation of the contract tomorrow but it is not us who has a final say," noted Rutskoy.

The vice-president said that the price offered by Russia is 20 to 30 percent below what other countries want for the same kind of hardware. Furthermore, a major part of the price could be paid in kind, with textiles, palm oil, and other goods.

Rutskoy also told journalists that a wide range of issues were discussed in trade and economic cooperation between the two countries. In particular, Malaysia showed interest in Russian hydrofoil ships, satellite communication and TV spacecraft, trucks, and numerous other goods. The two sides agreed that setting up joint ventures in Russia and Malaysia was the most promising kind of cooperation.

Yeltsin Said Considering G-7 Summit Invitation

MK0203132693 Moscow KOMMERSANT-DAILY in Russian 2 Mar 93 p 10

[Natalya Kalashnikova report: "Yeltsin To Be Invited to Tokyo Summit]

[Text] On 27 February, the finance ministers of the G-7 industrialized countries held a meeting in London. They exchanged opinions on the prospects for economic development in the major industrialized countries of the West and discussed the current status of Russia's economic reform and problems related to its foreign debt restructuring. It was an unofficial, consultative meeting that made no decisions on the issues discussed.

According to experts, the London meeting of the finance ministers is a prelude to a broader discussion of Russia's economic situation that will be held in Tokyo at the upcoming G-7 summit in July. The meeting agenda is expected to be dominated by questions of providing "international assistance for the Russian reforms." During the consultations the opinion was reaffirmed that it would be advisable to have the Russian president attend the July meeting of the G-7 leaders. This view is shared by German Chancellor Helmut Kohl and Japanese Prime Minister Kiichi Miyazawa, who have just completed talks in Tokyo.

The Russian Foreign Ministry believes that the question of Boris Yeltsin's being invited to the Tokyo summit is "all but settled." According to Foreign Ministry officials, the question now is a different one: whether the president will accept. The problem is, Andrey Kozyrev has asserted, that Yeltsin's participation in the meeting of the G-7 leaders "must not be tied in" with the problems of Russian-Japanese relations, particularly the territorial question, which is by far the most contentious.

Moscow, PLO Call For Early Resumption of Arab-Israeli Talks

LD0203180193 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1713 GMT 2 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS diplomatic correspondent Sergey Postanogov]

[Text] Moscow March 2 TASS—Russia and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) called for an early resumption of peaceful Arab-Israeli talks, but said the problem of the deported 400 Palestinians should be solved as it impedes negotiations.

The opinion was voiced during the talks of Mahmud 'Abbas (known as Abu-Mazin), member of the PLO Executive Committee, which he completed in Moscow on Tuesday.

During his brief stay in the Russian capital 'Abbas met Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev, his deputy Boris Kolokolov and other officials of the ministry.

The Israeli deportation of Palestinians was in the focus of discussion. The parties noted the necessity to urgently solve the problem as it had already disrupted peaceful negotiations initiated in Madrid and remains an obstacle in resuming the talks.

Russia, as a co-sponsor of the Middle East peaceful negotiations, confirmed its adherence to a peaceful settlement of the conflict, its desire to actively cooperate with the United States, Israel, Arab countries and all other parties interested in solving the crisis by peaceful means.

Conference Held on Demarcation of Russian-Chinese Border

LD0103195693 Moscow Radio Moscow World Service in English 1600 GMT 1 Mar 93

[Text] A conference on the demarcation of the Russian-Chinese border has been held in Khabarovsk, Russia's far east. The sides agreed to start implementing the border demarcation accord next month to complete it in five years time. The absence of the border line, as stipulated by law, repeatedly led to bloody armed clashes between China and the former USSR in the past.

Economic, Military Agreements With Kazakhstan Viewed

PM0203160593 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 2 Mar 93 pp 1,3

[Vladimir Urban and Anatoliy Ladin report: "Russia and Kazakhstan Need Each Other: Presidents B. Yeltsin and N. Nazarbayev Have Decided To Conclude a Treaty on Military Cooperation"]

[Text] The presidents of Russia and Kazakhstan had talks on 27 February. At this latest meeting Boris Yeltsin and Nursultan Nazarbayev summed up the results of the talks between the two countries' delegations. It is characteristic that the presidents reached accords on stepping up efforts aimed at creating a single ruble zone. Thus it is most likely in this area that the rapprochement between Russia and Kazakhstan in the economic and financial spheres will take place first.

Close cooperation is also planned in the military sphere. The final communique notes that on the basis of the CIS Collective Security Treaty, Russia and Kazakhstan have decided to conclude a treaty on military cooperation aimed at the creation of a single defense area and the joint use of military potential. The defense ministers have been instructed to prepare the draft document within a month. The sides also expressed the same opinion on the use of the military-industrial complex and its conversion and the use of the Baykonur space center and other ranges for national economic interests.

The accelerated development of ties between Russia and Kazakhstan was also confirmed by the visit to the Almaty mountain pass last week by Russian Security Minister Viktor Barannikov, during which he and Bulat Bayekenov, chairman of the National Security Committee, signed an agreement on cooperation between special services and collaboration on border questions. A protocol on counterintelligence support for military units and subunits was also signed. At a joint press conference between Barannikov and Bayekenov, it was noted that Kazakhstan's newly formed border troops need help and support. Russia will give that help. At the same time regular cooperation is being established between their special services based on the agreement between the Russian Security Ministry and the Kazakhstan National Security Committee of 25 March 1992.

Let us note that there are no control zones or border details on the border between the countries. And, as Bulat Bayekenov said, there will not be any. Nevertheless, according to Viktor Barannikov, the agreement signed on this occasion includes the question of reinforcing the border between Russia and Kazakhstan with an internal customs control service. This has become necessary not for political reasons but because of the activation of organized crime, including in the economic sphere.

There was a question on whether the "transparency" of the borders with Russia is not an obstacle to Kazakhstan when it comes to the freer development of relations with some other countries (Iran and Pakistan), which have proposed the establishment of visa-free travel to Kazakhstan. In this connection Viktor Barannikov said that interest in the two countries' strategic installations has not diminished "as far as many are concerned." That is why the special services are joining forces in defense of each other's legitimate interests.

Talks With Moldova Focus on Russian Troop Withdrawal

LD0203191393 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1635 GMT 2 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS diplomatic correspondent Vladimir Suprun]

[Text] Moscow March 2 TASS—Another round of negotiations of Russian and Moldovan Government delegations was held here today to elaborate an agreement on the status, procedure and term of withdrawal of Russian troops temporarily stationed on Moldovan territory.

A statement of the Russian Foreign Ministry circulated here today says, in particular, the sides have prepared for signing the text of a bilateral agreement on assistance to mine clearing of terrain areas on territory of the Moldovan Dniester region.

They also generally coordinated the text of an agreement of the two countries' Defence Ministries on flight activities of the Russian Armed Forces units temporarily stationed on Moldovan territory and the use of the Tiraspol airfield by cargo aviation of the Russian Defence Ministry.

The negotiations were attended by representatives of the Moldovan Dniester region.

Latvian Minister's UN Speech Termed 'Irresponsible'

LD0203183593 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1601 GMT 2 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS diplomatic correspondent Igor Shubin]

[Text] Moscow March 2 TASS—The speech by Latvian Foreign Minister Georgs Andrejevs at the 49th session of the U.N. Human Rights Commission was unfriendly and irresponsible, the Russian Foreign Ministry spokesman told ITAR-TASS on Tuesday. The minister expressed "deep concern over the fate of Latvians in Russia".

The spokesman stressed that the Latvian diplomat did not quote a single example of discrimination by Russian authorities against Latvians living in Russia.

On the other hand, the world community recorded its justified concern in an appropriate resolution of the 47th U.N. General Assembly over the situation with the rights of a considerable part of ethnic Russians living in Latvia.

In the opinion of the Foreign Ministry spokesman, Andrejevs' attempts to accuse Russia of "continued colonisation and Russification of Latvia and Estonia" were also unacceptable from the viewpoint of normal diplomatic relations between neighbouring sovereign states.

The Latvian minister groundlessly alleged that the presence of "great numbers of foreign troops in Latvia is used as a screen to support some official and unofficial organisations whose aim is to prevent the pull-out of Russian troops from the Baltic states".

The minister voiced this allegation, despite repeated statements and real moves by Russia to withdraw its troops from the Baltics.

During his working visit to Austria, the Latvian minister accused Russia of fanning up a hostile attitude of the Russian minority to Latvia's independence "to carry out a new annexation of the republic".

Pronouncements by Latvian Defence Minister Talavs Jundzis and his deputy Valdis Patlovskis in an interview with the Finnish HELSINGIN SANOMAT newspaper are also improper, to put it mildly.

They alleged that "Russians at negotiations do not want to recognise Latvia's independence even on a single issue" and that "Russians are ready to capture the Latvian capital when a possible crisis comes".

The spokesman said that such groundless accusations and unjustifiably passionate statements can lead to unpredictable consequences in bilateral relations.

The spokesman stressed that the Russian side continues to suggest another way: To move the negotiating process towards complete normalisation of Russian-Latvian relations and to turn them into good-neighbourly relations of cooperation based on mutual equality and respect for each other's interests, with full observation of international norms in the human rights sphere.

The appropriate Russian proposals and draft agreements were submitted to the interstate negotiations. Now it is up to the Latvian side to act, he concluded.

Political Issues

Yeltsin Chairs National Security Council Meeting

Urges Action on Creating Military Doctrine

LD0303095093 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0931 GMT 3 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Gennadiy Talalayev]

[Text] Moscow March 3 TASS—The Russian National Security Council met today to discuss the military doctrine and the main provisions of the concept of Russia's foreign policy and also the problem of Cossacks.

In his opening address to the council President Boris Yeltsin noted that Russia needed a military doctrine badly and "honestly speaking any further delay with its adoption is inadmissible".

Yeltsin described as fundamental the second item on the agenda concerning Russia's foreign policy concept. Without giving a clear-cut definition of Russian foreign policy priorities, no system can be expected of the Russian state's international activity and the promotion of Russia's national interests, the president pointed out.

Yeltsin stressed close interrelations of these two items and said that any delay with the military doctrine and the concept of foreign policy destabilised the situation in Russia and gave rise to political speculations.

The danger lies in the fact that in addition to groundless criticism of specific steps, the strategic aims of the Russian political leadership are increasingly often called into question. The leaders have to occupy defensive positions as long as the country lacks a clear-cut military doctrine and a foreign political concept, Yeltsin said.

Another item to be discussed today concerns the appeal of the Cossacks, Yeltsin continued. It also belongs to the pressing issues, but in adopting a decision on it, we must weigh all circumstances of the life of this category of people, the developments in regions where they live in compact communities and the need to restore historical justice. We must take into account the strengthening of stability and security of Russia, Yeltsin said.

The meeting is being held behind closed doors, and an official statement is expected to be made in the afternoon after it ends.

Shakhray, Kozyrev, Grachev, Others Attend

OW0303094693 Moscow INTERFAX in English 0923 GMT 3 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Wednesday the Russian Security Council opened a session, presided over by Russian President Boris Yeltsin, in the Kremlin. Participating in the session are Vice-Premier Sergey Shakhray, Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev, Defense Minister Pavel Grachev, Security Minister Viktor Barannikov, Justice Minister Nikolay Fedorov and Foreign Intelligence chief Yevgeniy Primakov. Commanders of military districts, the Navy and flotillas are attending the session.

The Russian President put two issues on the agenda: Russia's military doctrine and the fundamentals of its foreign policy. There are also plans to discuss an appeal from the Cossack community.

In his opening address President Yeltsin said that Russia acutely needed a military doctrine and no further delay of formulating one could be tolerated. The fundamentals of Russia's foreign policy were also important to lay down. "Until we understand full well what they are, we cannot provide for our state to operate on the international arena and for its pursuit of national interests," emphasized Yeltsin.

According to Yeltsin, the two questions, military doctrine and foreign policy, were closely connected. Any delay with formulating either, said the president, directly "causes the destabilization of the situation in Russia" and gives rise to a good deal of political speculations. "It is dangerous in that, in addition to ungrounded criticism of specific steps by Russia's political leaders, criticism increasingly focuses on the strategic goals of the political leadership," says Yeltsin.

Until Russia has a viable foreign policy concept and military doctrine, "we will have to assume a defensive posture." "A purely defensive stance is quite a novelty for the Russian armed forces. We must use political means to cut the ground from under the feet of those who are taking advantage of this period to pursue their political goals, and we must act resolutely and firmly. This must be done to protect democracy, Russia and Russians."

Speaking about the Cossack appeal, Yeltsin said that Cossack problems were also "relatively hot." "Making decisions on this issue, we must weigh up all circumstances of the life of these people, the developments in the regions where there are large Cossack communities and the need for historical justice to be satisfied," said the president.

Kostikov on Meeting

LD0303130693 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1220 GMT 3 Mar 93

[Text] Moscow March 3 ITAR-TASS—The Russian National Security Council met in the Kremlin today, presided over by President Yeltsin. The council considered the main provisions of the concept of the foreign policy of the Russian Federation drafted by the Interdepartmental Foreign Political Commission of the Russian National Security Council.

It was decided to approve the main provisions of the concept in principle and submit them to the Russian parliament for approval as the basis of the foreign political activity of the bodies of the executive power, the Russian Presidential Spokesman Vyacheslav Kostikov told ITAR-TASS.

The council also discussed the main political principles of the military doctrine of the Russian Federation. In accordance with the decision made by the council, these political principles must serve as the basis for the elaboration of the military and military- technical parts of the military doctrine.

The National Security Council of the Russian Federation examined the appeal of the Cossacks and decided to draft legislative acts providing for the further development of self-government of the Cossack people.

After the Security Council meeting, President Boris Yeltsin met with the general staff of the Russian Defence Ministry. No details of the meeting were immediately known, according to the presidential press service.

Foreign Ministry on Reaction to Yeltsin's Civic Union Speech

OW0303121193 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1140 GMT 3 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] "The Russian president has expressed his amazement over foreign press interpretations of part of his speech to the forum of the Civic Union on February 27," according to a statement issued by the Russian foreign ministry and received by Interfax which refers to Yeltsin's phrase ..."Russia's vital interest in halting all armed conflicts on the territory of the former USSR." The phrase had, according to the statement, "been taken out of context both of the speech and of the established position of the Russian Federation on the above issue and had been given an almost neo-imperialist undertone." "Nothing could be further from the truth," the statement emphasized.

The statement went on to point out that Yeltsin had, in fact, "once more raised an issue which Russian diplomacy has raised several times in the past." The issue concerned was "Russia taking on the responsibility of maintaining peace in certain areas of the former USSR, but only at the request of or with the full consent of the republics in question." Any expenditure incurred in meeting these obligations, the statement added, would have to be met almost entirely by Russia alone.

The statement also emphasized that if the settlement of other conflicts was being assisted by the UN, the task of settling those in the former USSR should be shared, especially in material terms. The foreign ministry considered that "the same kind of intervention from the UN in conflicts in the CIS would not only not be detrimental to the sovereignty of our partners but would, on the contrary, enable them, as members of the UN, to rely with confidence on any assistance granted by it (i.e. the UN) to strengthen international peace."

[Moscow INTERFAX in English at 1140 GMT on 3 March adds: "According to the Russian Federation Foreign Ministry, Ukraine's reaction to Boris Yeltsin's speech was 'slightly emotional.' 'We would prefer Ukrainian colleagues, mindful of good relaitons between our countries, request us for explanations which would have been forthcoming. In this way, we would have avoided unneeded disputes,' emphasized the Russian Foreign Ministry in a separate press release."]

Stankevich Interprets Yeltsin's Remarks

OW0203192693 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1903 GMT 2 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Sergey Stankevich, the Russian president's adviser on political affairs has commented for INTERFAX on one of the provisions' of the president's statement at the Civic Union congress on Sunday, when he said that "the moment has come when the UN can endow Russia with special powers as guarantor of peace and stability on the territory of the former Soviet Union."

In the opinion of Sergey Stankevich, the president implied that Russia's troops, as peacekeeping forces, are de facto involved in various armed conflicts on the territory of the CIS. Such peacekeeping missions are carried out by the Russian troops deployed, for example, in Tajikistan or in Trans-Dniester.

There is no doubt, he said, that their role is positive as much as they are indispensable there, for it would be difficult for any other party to replace Russia in that capacity. What the Russian president implied, in particular, Sergey Stankevich said, was that Russia's peacekeeping mission would be even more efficient if, under certain circumstances, its troops could also operate on the UN mandate.

In the opinion of the Russian president's adviser, the president's words in no way suggested Russia's infringement on the sovereignty of any other country nor was there any hint at the "elder brother's" doctrine.

Any peacekeeping forces allocated by Russia can only perform their duty when there is goodwill in that regard of all those who are directly involved, he said. In the opinion of Mr Stankevich, the censorious innuendoes in the press in response to the president's speech have come as a result of inadequate interpretation of the president's words.

Yeltsin Speech at Civic Union Forum Assessed

PM0203161193 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 2 Mar 93 First Edition p 1

[Commentary by Robert Minasov under the "Forum" rubric: "Plan for Revolution in Russia Fulfilled"]

[Text] Those words, uttered by Aleksandr Vladislavlev, cochairman of the All-Russian "Renewal" Union, at the second "Civic Union" forum held 28 February in the

Hall of Columns in Moscow's House of Unions, expressively characterize the atmosphere prevailing at this imposing assembly.

The main report was delivered by Vice President Aleksandr Rutskoy, one of "Civic Union's" leaders. He noted that "Civic Union" operates in a framework of creativity and is ready for collaboration with all parties and movements, becoming an influential sociopolitical force.

"'Civic Union' is ready to become the mainstay of power in the interests of Russia," the vice president stressed.

However, let us return to the beginning. It is worth noting that the appearance in the forum's presidium of Russian President Boris Yeltsin plunged its delegates, if not into a state of shock, at least into boundless amazement. After all, the president, in the words of Vasiliy Lipitskiy, chairman of the "Civic Union" Council, was warned in advance not to expect an easy ride: Unpleasant "surprises" could be on offer. But Boris Nikolayevich did not heed the warning and received a weighty share of "radioactive" criticism. All would have been fine, if not for the abusive, gnashing speech of Andrey Golovin, chairman of the "Smena—New Policy" public association and leader of the parliamentary faction of the same name.

Nikolay Gonchar, chairman of the Moscow City Soviet—he is also chairman of "Civic Union's" Moscow Regional Department—speaking directly after Golovin, mildly chided the young politician: Such opinions are no proof of constructiveness of ideas and thoughts.

Many subsequent speakers assessed the fact that Boris Nikolayevich was allowed to speak first as a hand stretched out for accord and mutual understanding. "Let us hope that it is not left dangling in mid-air," Vasiliy Lipitskiy commented.

However, it would be premature to talk of complete mutual understanding and peace. The president for the time being maintained his own positions, although he expressed a readiness to review them. Within what limits? We will see later. Boris Yeltsin stated that the slogan "All Power to the Soviets!" and the separation of powers are incompatible in the same constitution. A choice must be made, and as soon as possible. He is convinced that the Supreme Soviet is increasingly concentrating day-to-day executive functions in its own hands. In effect, Russia has two governments—the constitutional government headed by Viktor Chernomyrdin, and a second government under the aegis of the Supreme Soviet.

Yeltsin warned against a counterrevolutionary explosion. Unbridled calls for the forcible overthrow of constitutional institutions must be nipped in the bud through criminal procedures.

The president expressed readiness to consult public associations, parties, and movements on all issues. He suggested that the Supreme Soviet elaborate and adopt a law on power denoting a clear separation of powers, and is convinced that there is a need to create a Soviet of the Federation.

Finally, Yeltsin stated that if an agreement is not concluded between the president and the Supreme Soviet, a referendum must be held.

However, the overwhelming majority of speakers at the forum actually opposed a referendum—representatives of the "Renewal" union, the Russian Democratic Party, "Left Center—Cooperation," the Federation of Independent Trade Unions of Russia, the Free Russia People's Party, and other parties, blocs, and parliamentary factions in "Civic Union." Some expressed agreement with holding the referendum, but only on one issue: whether or not there should be early presidential and parliamentary elections.

Umar Temirov, coordinator of the "Sovereignty and Equality" faction, rejected the idea of early elections. Vasiliy Lipitskiy also reacted skeptically on this question. At a press conference held straight after the forum, he said: I am sure that after today's assembly many supporters of early elections will consider whether it is necessary in such difficult sociopolitical conditions to inflame them still further, disastrously splitting society.

The forum adopted no statements or resolutions, in line with its now perfected standing orders. The forum, in Vasiliy Lipitskiy's definition, is a tribune for expressing standpoints and ideas.

Yeltsin's Overture to Civic Union First Sign of New Strategy

PM0203151393 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 2 Mar 93 p 1

[Sergey Chugayev report: "Yeltsin Urges All Reformist Forces To Reach Accord"]

[Text] The Russian president's unscheduled vacation ended with one of the most significant recent political events—his speech at a congress of the "Civic Union" bloc. By all accounts the elaboration of an internal political strategy, which required a 12-day time-out, is complete and its implementation has begun.

This strategy's essence, it can be concluded even now on the basis of B. Yeltsin's speech at the "Civic Union" forum, is the desire to unite all—not only openly reformist but also potentially reformist—political forces in the face of a sharp increase in the activeness of procommunist, antireformist forces. At the same time it is already possible to talk about the reverse process. The same threat is prompting the reforms' supporters to unite around the president.

On the whole Yeltsin's decision to extend his hand toward "Civic Union" cannot be viewed as anything but correct. Just like any decision aimed at reaching national accord and opposing an attack of reaction. Especially as resuming the dialogue, which was begun on the eve of the Seventh Congress and broken off because of both sides' not altogether smart actions, now looks like maybe the only chance of preserving Russia's movement in the direction of democratic reforms by legal and constitutional means.

Although the very fact that Yeltsin spoke at the "Civic Union" forum is highly significant, it follows from the congress results and the comments by its participants that the event's results should not be overestimated at the moment. The positions of Yeltsin and the "Civic Union" remain different on such questions as the holding of a referendum and simultaneous early elections of the president and parliament. At the same time the obvious rapprochement between the president and vice president is revealing. Speaking at the congress, A. Rutskoy supported, in particular, Yeltsin's idea concerning the need to adopt a law on power in the transitional period and concerning the possibility that the Federation Council headed by the president and the chairman of parliament could be the guarantor of its fulfillment.

But the main subject of the talks, which, it was announced, will be continued between the president and "Civic Union" leaders, will undoubtedly be the future of the government and the future of economic reforms. Judging from the "Civic Union" leaders' comments, they intend to insist on substantial changes in the cabinet of ministers. Rutskoy expressed himself even more forcefully on this subject, stating: "It must now be a question not of correcting the economic course, the entire course must be radically changed." The change of course, according to Rutskoy, should lead "to an improvement in the manageability of the national economy and should increase the extent to which the economy is regulated by the state."

It is impossible not to agree with the opinion of the president's press secretary that it would be beneficial to society if the "Civic Union's" solid center potential united with such a powerful stabilization factor as the president. For this reason it is so important that both the president and "Civic Union" leaders bear in mind during further consultations the experience of the talks on the eve of the seventh congress and that, having set themselves reasonable aims, they reach a reasonable compromise.

The breakdown of the talks between the president and "Civic Union" leaders on the eve of the Seventh Congress in many respects promoted the abrupt outbreak of the constitutional crisis. But now the president is talking bluntly of the danger of an explosion of counterrevolution.

Further on Yeltsin Address to Democratic Choice

LD0203225893 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 2030 GMT 2 Mar 93

[Address by President Boris Yeltsin to leaders of Democratic Choice in Moscow on 2 March—recorded]

[Text] Economic crisis in Russia has been compounded by constitutional crisis and political crisis. This shows that we can expect conservative forces to come to power via the congress. And, accordingly, these conservative forces (?would mean) a complete turn away from the reforms, a rejection of reforms which people are already gradually beginning to get used to and to understand what's what. Of course, this is a violation of all the democratic principles which democratic leaders and the democratic movement, the many democratic movements and now the Democratic Choice association, have managed to gain over a short period.

Yes, a president's choice is not a simple one in such a situation. All the same, one must agree to political consultations with other organizations, associations, and political parties. Still, at the present time, in this period, the democrats will not be able to pull this cart out alone. We must of course discard the ultra-right, and also exclude the ultra-left. But at the very least we must consult with those who tread a central path, or to the right or left of the center, and we must draw up some kind of shared viewpoint, especially on the congress.

The congress will probably start on 10 March, and although the Supreme Soviet will discuss the agenda of the congress on Thursday, and although there is a provisional agreement with the chairman of the Supreme Soviet that only one question will be there, that is, the question of a referendum or a constitutional accord, I do not have such certainty. After all, you and I know this congress of ours, and hence we know that the bargaining in front of the microphones will start again and that any question could be included at the congress; and under this other question, the most awful thing could happen, which we must never allow. Therefore, in the days ahead before the congress, literally every day, and several times a day—I already mentioned this while meeting at the congress of the Civic Union—I will hold political consultations with various associations, movements, parties, factions, and so on.

Such consultations will be held. In the course of these consultations and meetings, it is not only your opinion that I would ask for, no. I would put the question somewhat tougher: The time is such now that having conversations for their own sake and then voting in a different way at the congress, this is what I call treason. Pure and simple. Therefore, either there is the referendum—and then I will put forward, in a couple of days, those questions which will be included in the referendum on behalf of the president; these will be upfront questions, three questions straight from the hip, which the Parliament will certainly reject. They will be offered as alternative questions. Nevertheless, the people will have to vote on them anyay.

Second, if the congress votes against holding the referendum, then the accord will simply be rejected, although it would be surprising, because there was a conciliation commission and agreement was reached by absolutely everyone, unanimously. I mean the congress passed a decision and now they have set about destroying this whole accord in parts and as a whole.

Second [as heard], if the congress votes against holding the referendum, a constitutional accord has been prepared by us. It is a more comprehensive agreement than the one adopted at the Seventh Congress; in this agreement we want to return to the constitution of April 1992. I vowed no allegiance to the constitution with the amendments made by the sixth and seventh congresses, which fully destroyed the balance of powers. It is these very amendments which fully destroyed the balance of powers. And it ushered in the omnipotence of the soviets. So we should say firmly and unequivocally: No, we will not allow the omnipotence of the soviets, we favor a civilized path of development and an equal balance of all branches of power.

In this agreement—it has been handed out to you—this draft agreement, it is important that you should read it while discussions are under way; it has been sent to the Supreme Soviet [sentence as heard]. I agreed when I met Khasbulatov that we will exchange the drafts as non-constitutional agreements. I have received nothing from him. I have officially sent him the draft which is in your hands. I believe that if this agreement is adopted at the congress, it will create a way out of the constitutional and political impasse.

Do find time to read it, because even today I would use this formula: Who is for this accord and who is against? That is the way it is. Otherwise, to all appearances everyone is for, but when votes are tallied at the congress, something altogether different emerges. I do not here want to voice any personal suspicions against any of you comrades. Nonetheless, it is the responsibility of us all to fight for the accord if the referendum is voted down. We will fight and I will raise this issue in precisely the same manner with everyone else I will meet.

One can mention yet another issue: The accord is voted down at the congress. Despite our efforts, the congress adopts a decision which emasculates this constitutional accord by at least two-thirds. This is no way out of the situation; it is no way out of the impasse, it is no way out of the constitutional or political crisis.

Therefore, if things take this course, President Yeltsin still has a little something in reserve. I think that we will either have to go for an appeal to the people from the president, as has been announced, and in accordance with that, for a public opinion survey of the entire electorate, a sort of referendum. Bearing in mind, however, that it is the president rather than the Supreme Soviet, this formula, an appeal of this kind, is open to the president. And let the people, all the voters have their say. This too would be done through the polling stations and in an organized manner. It might produce little in constitutional terms, but it would be clear to the people then just who they support, and how and along which path we should proceed.

Then there is a final option that I should not like to see. I don't think things will go that far. I don't want them to. There should be respect for the constitution. If, however, the conservatives adopt extreme measures in order to destroy Russia, then other methods must be sought to save Russia and the reforms. That's all I have to say.

Yeltsin Still To Decide on 'Soft,' 'Tough' Line

LD0203161193 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1528 GMT 2 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS writer Lyudmila Aleksandrova]

[Text] Moscow March 2 TASS—In the opinion of observers, Russian President Boris Yeltsin has not finally decided what line to keep to - "soft" or "tough".

A provision of the compromise agreement between the three power branches at the 7th Congress of Russian People's Deputies in December, 1992, was the holding of a Russian referendum on new constitution fundamentals in April, 1993. At that time, this decision reconciled the sides, but since then the referendum idea has been losing popularity.

The Russian president has also understood unconditional supporters of the referendum are in minority on the Russian political scene. "Democrats alone will not pull out this heavy cart," the president admitted today, speaking to representatives of the Democratic Choice.

On February 28 Yeltsin addressed a forum of the Civic Union bloc, the most powerful centrist group in "constructive opposition" to the authorities. "My very appearance at the Civic Union forum testifies to the fact I have considerably revised its role and intend to have a dialogue with the Union, since it unites great political forces," the president told PRAVDA today.

However, on the same day, speaking at a forum of his associates from the Democratic Choice, Yeltsin again deviated from "political peaceableness" and spoke tough. In case "conservatives go to the extremes to break Russia, the Russian president has the last variant of solution of today's political and constitutional crisis for the sake of saving Russia, democracy and reforms".

Not commenting on the variant essence, Boris Yeltsin said he would not like it to happen, since one should respect the constitution.

If the congress, which will be held on March 10 in case of a positive parliament decision, votes against the referendum, a constitutional agreement will be needed. If the agreement is not adopted, "the president has something more to offer," said Yeltsin.

If something more is the introduction of presidential or emergency rule, one can doubt the presence of necessary power structures capable of ensuring it, said head of the Russian Democratic Party Board Valeriy Khomyakov.

Not all of them are orienting on the president. One cannot also forget about possible reaction of foreign states, added Khomyakov.

The upcoming congress, which threatens to be even more tense than the previous one, seems to clarify, at least partially, the final stand of the president and the soonest political prospect in Russia.

Yeltsin Uncertain Congress To Pass Constitutional Accord

OW0203144493 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1421 GMT 2 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Russian President Boris Yeltsin said after his meeting with representatives from political parties and movements belonging to Democratic Choice in Moscow Tuesday [2 March] that his aim to "secure either a power-sharing agreement or a referendum" had received "total support."

"We reached the general conclusion that it would be impossible to disregard the "Congress of Russian People's Deputies," [quotations as received] he told journalists.

Yeltsin declared, however, that he was not fully convinced that the constitutional accord could be accepted by the Congress. In such an event he said he would turn to the nation, pointing out that he would do "everything possible to achieve a compromising peace agreement." When asked by Interfax correspondent V. Terekhov whether had the strength and determination to resort to extreme measures Yeltsin said that he was a "brave man" and that he would do just this if it was a matter of "saving Russia." Yeltsin's press spokesman Vyacheslav Kostikov said after the meeting that those who had attended had declared that Yeltsin was the only guarantee for the reforms taking place. They said that, come what may, the president may count on the support of the democratic intelligentsia.

Regarding Yeltsin's appearance at Sunday's meeting of the Civic Union, the democrats said, according to Kostikov, that they fully supported the president's proposal for dialogue with all political movements. But they also warned Yeltsin not to overestimate Civic Union's real strength, saying that the Union was in many respects non-uniform.

The Constitutional Court, which "had virtually crossed over to the oppositional camp," came under fire at the meeting. Delegates called for the court to give legal judgment on the Seventh Congress as this had, they said, "carried out a virtual constitutional coup." They pointed out that the Congress had made 320 amendments to the Constitution within the last year and that this was what had destroyed the balance of powers. The Congress' exploits, the speakers continued, testified to the fact that a quiet constitutional coup had taken place in the country.

Cossack representatives at the meeting said that the president had the full backing of their ten million-strong community. The same guarantees were made by representatives of workers' bodies. All those present warned of the threat of fascist dictatorship. The two options for Russia, they said, were "either strong presidential power or a strong fascist dictatorship." Delegates at the meeting appealed to the mass media to vindicate the democratic process more fully and not to advertise the cause of fascists, August Coup leaders or revanchists.

Yeltsin on Surmounting Constitutional Crisis

PM0203221593 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 3 Mar 93 p 1

[Vasiliy Kononenko report: "'Democratic Choice' Agrees With President: Either a Constitutional Agreement, or a Referendum"]

[Text] The president's going to the people—to the Civic Union forum—on Sunday, which was interpreted by some observers as a readiness to modify his course in a "rightward" direction, has, all the evidence suggests, a somewhat different goal—to attract to his side as many influential political forces as possible before the congress.

This is demonstrated by the president's speech at a meeting with representatives of the parties, movements, associations, and parliamentary factions belonging to the "Democratic Choice" movement. The meeting was held in the "President Hotel" 2 March. Introducing the assembled representatives to the president, Konstantin Truyevtsev stressed that parliament was already lost for the democratic movement, to which only the executive vertical of power now remained. But these losses are not fatal. We have managed to consolidate 81 parties and associations around the idea of a referendum and a Constitutional Assembly. A staff has been set up to prepare for the congress, and a dialogue has been started with all major political blocs, including "Civic Union." We expect the president to show firmness in carrying out reforms, he stressed.

In his speech B. Yeltsin stressed, in particular:

"For Russia one of the most difficult periods in its postwar history has now arrived. We are encountering a crisis that is economic, political, and constitutional. In the situation which has developed conservative forces seeking a retreat from reforms via the congress could come to power. This would mean a rejection of the democratic principles of society's development. In this situation the president is faced with no simple choice. It is necessary, of course, to engage in political consultation with all influential forces. In the prevailing situation the democrats alone do not have the strength to draw the wagon with its heavy load. Of course, the ultra-left and ultra-right must be excluded from the consultation process. But those who are nearer to the center should be included in the consultation process; a common approach should be elaborated with them, especially as concerns the congress. As you know, the congress will probably begin 10 March. And although an agreement exists with the chairman of the Supreme Soviet that on Thursday the session will discuss one question—on placing on the conference agenda a constitutional agreement or on holding a referendum—I am not confident. Any question could be submitted to the congress, and the most terrible thing could happen, which must not be allowed. I worked on this problem while on vacation, and I am now seeking wide consultations. But I want to put the question to you forthrightly: Don't simply express your own viewpoints at this meeting—a firm stance and firm actions are needed on your part. That is what the times are like now. To speak here about one thing and vote for another at the congress—that is called treachery. Either a referendum—in which case I will submit three specific questions. If the Supreme Soviet does not adopt them, these questions will be submitted as alternative (presidential) questions.

"If the referendum does not take place (although that would be surprising in view of the existing agreement reached at the Seventh Congress), I have a constitutional agreement prepared. But a wider agreement in comparison with the one adopted at the Seventh Congress, which is based on the 1992 Constitution. I did not take the oath of allegiance to the Constitution with its current amendments, the president stressed. These amendments destroyed the balance of powers and made the soviets all-powerful. If this agreement is adopted—this would be a way out of the constitutional impasse.

"If the congress adopts an agreement whose content is emasculated, that is not a way out of the impasse. In such an event the president has one or two other things in reserve. It would be necessary to take the step of appealing to the people and calling Russians to a referendum over the heads of the congress and the Supreme Soviet. The people themselves will determine. Then it would be clear what Russians want.

"There is a final option which I did not want to mention because, I think, things will not reach that point—after all, the Constitution must be respected," B. Yeltsin stressed. "But if the conservatives go to any lengths to stop the reforms, to destroy Russia—for the sake of saving all this, it is necessary to seek other paths," the president said.

Before the meeting began, IZVESTIYA's correspondent asked G. Popov, spokesman of the Russian Movement for Democratic Reforms, to state his opinion about the prevailing situation. He said, in particular:

"In my view there are two ways out of the crisis. The first is to seek the agreement of all political forces in society, and not just the two branches of power. Then it would be possible to elaborate a common economic program for the next two years—until the expiry of the powers of the president and the congress. In that time it would be possible to fulfill a minimum of economic transformations, adopt a new Constitution, and then hold free elections. Hypothetically this version can be called 'Elections-95.'

"The second option is that the protraction of the crisis and the destruction of Russia must not be allowed. In this connection, preparations for new elections should be forced through. But first it is necessary to hold a referendum, elect a Constitutional Assembly, adopt a law on elections and a new Constitution, and only then hold free elections," G. Popov stressed.

Sharing his impressions of the meeting, B. Yeltsin told journalists that he considers its main result to be full support for the president's line on a constitutional agreement or a referendum. To the question put by IZVESTIYA's correspondent as to which option the president gives preference—reaching a constitional agreement or a referendum, Yeltsin replied: "I do not entirely believe that the congress can adopt both a constitutional agreement and a referendum, although they did adopt a decision on this at the Seventh Congress, and this should also not be forgotten. But, if neither of this options succeeds, I will appeal to the people. In a couple of days I will send the referendum questions to the Supreme Soviet and make them public."

V. Kostik, the president's press secretary, reported that all participants in the meeting expressed decisive support for the president and his measures for overcoming the crisis. They stressed that they see the president as the guarantor of the continuation of reforms in Russia.

On the conclusion of the meeting the president stated that he will do everything possible to ensure the peaceful settlement of the constitutional crisis.

Rutskoy's Party Calls For Elections by 1994

LD0203182093 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1652 GMT 2 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent]

[Text] Moscow March 2 TASS—The People's Party of Free Russia, of which Vice-President Aleksandr Rutskoy is a leader, called for simultaneous pre-term parliamentary and presidential elections not later than in spring of 1994, according to a resolution made public on Tuesday.

President Boris Yeltsin opposes simultaneous pre-term elections and proposed to reelect the parliament in 1994 and the president in 1995. The leadership of the party, which makes part of the "Civic Union" bloc, decided to create election headquarters, to teach its activists the tactics of election campaigns and to start working out the election programme. Regional branches were recommended to start selecting candidates for elections.

Possible Need for State of Emergency Noted

OW0203170693 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1637 GMT 2 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Lev Ponomarev, one of the co-chairman of the Democratic Russia movement, believes that if ultra-right groupings continue to openly call for an armed rising then it is necessary to introduce a state of emergency in the country. He declared this in his interview with Interfax following a conference between representatives of the organizations within the association Democratic Choice and Russian President Boris Yeltsin held on Tuesday [2 March] in Moscow.

Ponomarev explained that he interprets demands to create armed groups in the army, which were published in the newspaper "Den" ("Day") as calls for a rebellion.

The President, as a guarantor of the constitutional system, should be ready to repel this attack, Ponomarev stressed. In Ponomarev's opinion, it could be done only by introducing a state of emergency.

It's a pity, but in the democratic system there are no special mechanisms to act rapidly and efficiently. A long legal procedure to investigate the facts of agitation in favor of armed struggle should be conducted. To preserve the constitutional system, Ponomarev says, resolute actions are needed.

At the same time Ponomarev declared that Tuesday's session did not discuss the possibility of introducing a state of emergency though the President once more underlined readiness and resoluteness to protect the constitutional system.

Shumeyko Interviewed on Referendum

LD0303083593

[Editorial Report] Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian at 2030 GMT on 1 March carries the 22-minute, recorded "Referendum" program in which commentator Irina Lapina interviews Vladimir Shumeyko, first deputy chairman of the Russian Government, in his office in Moscow. The date of the interview is not given.

Lapina begins the program with quotes from Pushkin's "Boris Godunov," specifically noting that "the people in horror keep silence." She goes on to talk about the upcoming referendum on the government. She then asks Shumeyko for the main arguments in favor of the referendum. Shumeyko notes that the main arguments stem from the economy. He says:

"Quite recently we held a big—or, as we say, extended—session of the government to which we invited all heads of republics forming part of Russia, the heads of administrations, and the leadership of the Supreme Soviet. There was the standard agenda as in former years: the results of 1992 and the tasks for 1993."

He goes on to say that all the mistakes of 1992 were specified and absolutely specific measures for 1993 were ratified. He says:

"There are 97 specific measures which have to be taken care of on a daily basis. Then we will be able to channel all the funds needed today to support the underprivileged strata of the population, halt the fall in production and start its restoration, improve finances, and for Russia's statehood—vital measures which have to be taken.

"Today's development shows that they can only be implemented with the concerted, only the concerted efforts of all branches of power. They will just remain on paper if we continue to divide power. But unfortunately, how it works out is that it has to be divided.

"The Seventh Congress in my view completed the transformation of power and gave up all the real power of the state to the Congress. If we look at the history of the Russian state, we see that the specific nature of Soviet power as such, of state power, is the concentration of power in some kind of single political institution. That was the CPSU. The people's deputies exerted the maximum effort to overthrow this power. But they came back to where they had set out from. Today all power has been given to the congress. After the amendments made by the Seventh Congress, the Congress of People's Deputies is now the supreme body of state power which can take for examination and decision any question coming under the jurisdiction of the Russian Federation.

"So, strictly speaking, from a juridical and political point of view a constitutional coup has taken place because the First Article of the Constitution states that democracy and the principle of the division of powers is the unshakable foundation of the Russian Federation Constitution. Both the one and the other were violated. We are now forced willy nilly to give some part of this power to the executive to carry this economy forward and comeup with the measures which are envisaged.

"The president is consistently taking steps in this question. Recently everyone was discussing his meeting with Khasbulatov. Now, following that meeting, the draft agreements are to appear and these agreements are to be concluded.

"I have the draft agreement here. As the government, I am most interested in Section 3. Section 3 says: In particular, the Russian Federal Property Fund is abolished. The federal nonbudgetary funds are transferred to the system of executive power. The Central Bank, Vneshekonombank, Vneshtorgbank, Goskomstat, and the Pension Fund are transferred to the subordination of the Russian Federation Government while remaining accountable to the Supreme Soviet.

So all the distributive functions that the Supreme Soviet possessed until today must be done together in one key, as it were, by all the powers.

Point 2 says: The adoption of credit emission decisions is done by the Supreme Soviet only after agreement with the government. Citizens are guaranteed the right to self-government backed with material and financial resources and protected from arbitrary interference of the state, its bodies, and officials.

"Those are three [as heard] points that would enable us as the executive power to immediately tackle economic transformations. However, as you know, nothing is happening. The deputies have lambasted this agreement. There is one legal way now: to address the people directly. This is a way out of the situation as provided by the Constitution."

Lapina goes on to detail other antireferendum concerns, including the cost and the general indifference of the population. People in the street in different regions of the country are split over the referendum; some are convinced it will fail, while those who are in favor of a referendum would like to see short, concise, and clear-cut questions. Most people sound tired and not hopeful.

Mr. L.K. Polezhayev, head of administration in the city of Omsk, Siberia, advocates at least one quiet year, without any upheavals, to reinforce logistics and to move up to new, more advanced positions in the running of the reform."

Lapina asks Shumeyko to comment on President Yeltsin's appeal to lay down the political arms for one year to tackle economic problems. Shumeyko responds, quoting Lenin's statement that "politics is the concentrated expression of economy." He says:

"Lenin was absolutely right. It is impossible today to put a divider between the policy and the economy. Again I will say: We cannot tackle the economy in a healthy way as long as our political situation remains what it is now."

He also points out that "it is clear what needs to be done, and how to go about it, but there is no possibility. We are constantly struggling for this wretched power." He continues:

"When the Congress granted itself the right to cancel presidential decrees and instructions, even resolutions of the councils of ministers of Russian Federation republics, that was a direct intervention! However, a similar right has not been granted to the president. That is, one branch of power has the authority to cancel all decisions, and that's exactly what is happening.

"As soon as the Seventh Congress had ended, the chairman of the Altay Kray Soviet of People's Deputies canceled, for the Altay Kray, all the presidential decrees and government resolutions issued before the Seventh Congress! In black and white, it says to be considered invalid over the territory of the Altay kray. The Chelyabinsk Soviet followed suit.

"So, what are we talking about? What economy, what building, what development of democracy?! If the congress has concentrated all power in its hands, let the Congress run the show then on its own! Why should we have other branches of power?

"All we need is to be given the chance to work in this economy. But it is this very issue that feels so raw: The majority of deputies in the congress disagree with this policy. They disagree with building a democratic society or with building a mixed economy. Many of them want to preserve the past, to bring socialism back.

"To be honest with you, not everything should be rejected in the new constitution. The best of socialism will remain, no doubt. The phenomena of life can not be downgraded to isms; they are much more diverse. We can't say: We are building socialism and then will proceed to build capitalism. We should build a society in which every human being will have dignity and a healthy life.

"All of this can be laid down in the new constitution, which will be adopted by the Constitutional Assembly, i.e. people's representatives who will not adopt anything against their own interests. Why are the opponents afraid of it? I don't know. Everybody is scared, saying do not go to the people, the people will not decide, they will not come to vote, or will come and say the wrong thing. Try speaking to the people! Ask the questions that everybody is waiting for! The people will have their say!"

The commentator concludes by noting that people are slowly overcoming their recent indifference to the referendum and urges people to take part in it.

Referendum Only Way Out of Constitutional Crisis

MK0203110493 Moscow NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA in Russian 2 Mar 93 p 1

[Vera Kuznetsova report under general headline "Boris Yeltsin Addresses Civic Union Session. The President Again Tests His Footing"]

[Text] However much they may argue about the gains and losses of an April referendum, the question is whether there is any alternative. A glimmer of potential agreement between the president and the soviets just appeared on the horizon but then vanished... The Supreme Soviet is clearly determined to convene an extraordinary congress before 11 April—a congress that will not let the president easily have his way. Nor will there be any constitutional (or compromise) agreement. This is confirmed by the words of Igor Muravyev, a member of the parliamentary working group charged with drafting the agreement: "We are just considering the president's initiative. Nothing more." According to Muravyev (and this is evidently the Supreme Soviet's position), it is not proper for the parliamentarians to have their own draft constitutional agreement while the Soviet Constitution still exists.

Now, what about the alternatives to a referendum. Let us not look at it as a compromise, but another way. Let us even object to our wonderful deputies or the Supreme Soviet speaker when they try to take our part and say that the people must not be robbed of their right to vote. My objection will be as follows: The authorities' concern for our rights is touching. But it is a question not of our rights, of which we will be robbed anyway at the congress, but of the authorities themselves. It is also a question of the self- contradictory Constitution (articles of it are at odds here), which has never been fully stripped of ideology... This is why the question—I mean the acute constitutional crisis—is being raised more and more often in much more dramatic terms than "the war between the branches of power." The point is that the current Constitution is unable to resolve the conflict of power without encroaching on the authority of either the soviets or the president. And neither of the branches of power can of its own volition tip the balance of power to its advantage. They could do it by force, but not by citing their legitimacy. (As a matter of fact, the Congress can hardly afford to threaten the president with its supremacy: after all, Yeltsin is popularly elected. Even the current Constitution is on his side in this instance.) Hence, whether the referendum is a good or bad idea, the only legitimate and peaceful way out of the constitutional crisis, if the branches of power cannot agree, is to hold it. Unfortunately, because the branches of power interpret the Constitution differently, the situation has no alternative solution, because an illegitimate and nonpeaceful way out of the crisis—a revolution, a coup, an emergency situation, an omnipotent congress or president—is not a solution, not an option. It is a choice: either, or. And if we are to opt for the peaceful "or," then let the majority decide (since no other mechanism has been invented). Let it decide first of all on the new constitution, or rather to whom its adoption should be entrusted.

Spokesman Denies Yeltsin Directive To Resume Nuclear Tests

LD0203195593 Moscow Mayak Radio Network in Russian 1900 GMT 2 Mar 93

[Text] The spokesman for the Russian president's press office has denied reports on a secret directive from Boris Yeltsin to prepare to resume nuclear tests. In a telephone interview to REUTER, Anatoliy Krasikov said that the press office receives documents from the president immediately after they have been signed, but there has been no directive on nuclear tests. Krasikov was commenting on an article in the German magazine STERN on the acquisition of a copy of a confidential Yeltsin decree regarding preparatory work to resume tests on the Arctic island of Novaya Zemlya.

Military & Space Issues

Grachev: Army To Remain 'Guarantor' of State's Stability

LD0203234293 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 2000 GMT 2 Mar 93

[From the "Novosti" newscast]

[Text] In connection with the fact that the Army has come to be mentioned more and more frequently in political arguments, Defense Minister Pavel Grachev made the following statement today: The Russian Army will remain the guarantor of the stability of the state, and the leadership of the Armed Forces will not permit any split in Army collectives due to political convictions.

Grachev expressed the Defense Ministry's position at a meeting with journalists today.

[Reporter S. Sokolova] At the news conference, it was a question not just of the political problems of the country, but also of the internal political problems of the Army. In response to a "Vesti" reporter's question about whether opposition to Defense Ministry policy was strong in the Armed Forces, Pavel Grachev answered that, by and large, there was no serious opposition. What was represented by the Shield Union, the Officers Union, and several other pseudo-patriotic groupings was not so dangerous. Pavel Grachev also denied rumors spread by the opposition bloc to the effect that the defense minister's chair would soon be occupied by someone else, adding:

[Begin Grachev recording] I am not clinging to my post, and you understand, I do not envy the one who has designs on my chair, let's say. But will anyone want to become defense minister at the present time? [end recording]

Housing Shortage for Over 140,000 Servicmen Reported

OW0203195793 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1905 GMT 2 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Almost 60,000 families of Russian servicemen moved to new apartments in 1992. 82,000 and 87,5000 will do so in 1993 and in 1995 respectively.

Defence Ministry spokesman says the Ministry is to build as many as 45,000 apartments in 1993, with a further 16,700 apartments being allocated by the government or purchased. As many as 14 townships comprising 9,600 apartments were built at Germany's cost.

However,the Ministry says that more than 140,000 servicemen are still on the housing list.

Army Surplus Arms To Be Channeled Through 'Voyentekh' Company

PM0203153193 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 27 Feb 93 p 2

[Defense Ministry Press Center report: "Export of Surplus Only Through 'Voyentekh'"]

[Text] Army General Pavel Grachev, Russian Federation minister of defense, has set the appropriate officials the task of inventorying and presenting to the Armed Forces General Staff a list of released and surplus arms and military hardware before the end of March this year. A specially issued directive from him requires that any surplus arms and military hardware be exported through the "Voyentekh" State Company. It was formed by a

Russian Federation Government directive with the aim of finding additional capital for implementing social protection programs for servicemen.

Session Discusses Defense Industry's Problems

PM0203155393 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 27 Feb 93 p 2

[Defense Ministry Press Center report: "Problems of Defense Sectors Discussed"]

[Text] An enlarged session of the presidium of the League To Assist Russian Defense Enterprises took place 25 February, in which the Russian Federation Ministry of Defense leadership participated. Questions of the Russian Federation defense budget for 1993, of conditions for fulfilling the state order, and the wage level of workers in industry's defense sector enterprises were discussed. Andrey Kokoshin, Russian first deputy defense minister, and Colonel General Vyacheslav Mironov, chief of armaments, attended the meeting and gave information on the steps which the Ministry of Defense is taking in questions of the state's indebtedness to enterprises as regards payment for the 1993 state order, preparing the ground for the transition to a contractual system of relations with enterprises producing arms and military hardware, assisting structural transformations of defense enterprises dictated by the changes in economic mechanisms in the country, and the arms program to the year 2000.

Particular attention in the discussion was paid to questions of Russia's collaboration with other CIS countries as regards mutual deliveries of equipment, joint developments, and the system guaranteeing mutual obligations.

According to League President Aleksey Shulunov, general director of the Pleshakov Science and Production Association, in spite of the grave economic situation in the country at present, what is necessary is additional collaboration and coordination of efforts by all government structures and the leaders of enterprise and any other organizations to preserve the national industrial potential as the basis for reviving Russia's state might.

General Staff Sets Up Environmental Protection Directorate

PM0203160193 Moscow ROSSIYSKIYE VESTI in Russian 26 Feb 93 p 2

[Mikhail Semenov report under the "Army" rubric: "Environmental Forces Created: Russian Federation Armed Forces General Staff Organizes New Structure—Directorate for the Environment and Special Means of Protection"]

[Text] For a long time the Army was cut off from our environmental problems and difficulties by an impenetrable wall, as it were. Although the Army contributed to the emergence of those problems and difficulties, the official instructions of the former Union Defense Ministry, which for the most part remain in force to this day, forbade unit commanders to allow access to civilian commissions.

"Our directorate," said its chief, Candidate of Technical Sciences Colonel Sergey Grigorov, "which has been set up on the initiative of the Ministry for the Protection of the Environment and Natural Resources, has brought together fragmented subunits and small agencies, whose activity was, morever, confined to monitoring functions.

"Our main task is to organize and coordinate environmental protection activity in the Russian Armed Forces with the aim of keeping the impact of military activity on the environment to the minimum and ensuring the protection of personnel operating in extreme conditions..."

It is impossible here not to recall the Chernobyl "clear-up personnel," who operated in difficult conditions at the nuclear electric power station at risk to health and life. And certainly no one who looks around is going to accuse me of exaggeration: At the slightest motivation, we call in the Army to help. And that is only natural: It has the specialized equipment, facilities, and men capable of tackling not just its official tasks. But, on the other hand, such help is also somewhat chaotic in nature now, it lacks a linchpin, as it were.

But this Directorate does not just function as a linchpin, it has its own Armed Forces' environmental backup program, which has become a section of the "Russian Environmental Safety Overview." Its basic provisions, Sergey Grigorov assured me, will be reflected in the military doctrine.

The Directorate is drawing up recommendations for each branch of forces: One imperative requirement is that a mandatory environmental audit be carried out during exercises.

I could not during my conversation with the directorate chief avoid the question of the burial of radioactive waste in the Kara Sea. The radiation situation there is normal, he assured me, and this has also been confirmed by foreign specialists, including Norwegian specialists.

I am sure that we will soon start citing the authoritative opinion of the Directorate for the Environment and Special Means of Protection, given that its staff includes six doctors of science and more than 10 candidates of science in the spheres of chemistry, medicine, meteorology, the environemnt...

Moscow To Launch Start I Missile Carriers

OW0203190493 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1822 GMT 2 Mar 93

[From the "Interfax Business Report" feature; following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Russia will conduct the first launch March 25 of new "Start-1" missile carriers, created on the basis of the

CC-20 and CC-25 ballistic missile mobile complex, and able to launch 550 kg of payload into orbit to altitudes of 700 km.

The missile, which Motorola, one of the largest American communications companies has expressed interest in, is designed to launch satellites into low orbits for government organizations and commercial structures to establish satellite communications systems, distance probing, and ecological control.

The "Start-1" missile carrier, to be launched from the Plesetsk (northern Russia) aerospace field will carry an experimental communications satellite developed by the Russian stock company IBK and the Kompleks scientific center.

Russian military aerospace forces, which launch all rockets in Russia, will put 5 satellites into orbit in March from the Plesetsk and Baykonur (Kazakhstan) aerospace fields.

Other Issues

Funding Problems Slow Forming Ethnic Conflict Unit

PM0303113193 Moscow ROSSIYSKIYE VESTI in Russian 26 Feb 93 p 2

[Interview with Nailya Malikova, conflict specialist on the Russian Federation State Commmittee for Federation and Nationalities Affairs, by Yuliya Ulyanova under the "Nation" rubric; place and date not given: "Mediator Means Intermediary: New Administration of the Russian Federation State Commmittee for Federation and Nationalities Affairs Being Set Up"—first paragraph is introduction]

[Text] As already reported by ROSSIYSKIYE VESTI, a new administration for forecasting and settling ethnic conflicts is being set up in the Russian Federation State Commmittee for Federation and Nationalities Affairs. Nailya Malikova, a conflict specialist on the state committee staff, talks about this in detail.

[Malikova] Unfortunately, the administration, on the idea of whose creation we have been working more than six months, still does not exist—there has been merely a verbal statement by Shakhray, but no order has been signed to date. There is only a group of conflict specialists, which was set up several months ago. If the order is signed, eight specialists will start working in the central apparatus of the administration for forecasting and settling ethnic conflicts, plus authorized representatives at local level. Although everything will depend, of course, on finance. We suggested that we could create 30 extra posts for an information network and service providing early warning of conflicts across the country. We asked for 200 million. But the finance minister thought this too large a sum. Whereas just four days of conflict in Ingushetia swallowed up 12 billion. That's economy for you!

As soon as the administration is set up, we will first of all carry out sociological monitoring, which makes it possible to obtain warning signals—otherwise forecasting is impossible. Second, we have to create an institution of mediators, that is to say, intermediaries in settling conflicts. We are already in contact with several international organizations like, for example, the UN University in Tokyo. We want to involve the Russian Academy of Sciences Institute of Ethnology in our work.

Training courses and seminars for people from local level are planned. And not just specialists—ethnosociologists and ethnopsychologists—but also for the leaders of various political parties, who will be able to play the role of shock absorbers in future conflicts.

Equipment—electronic mail or at least a fax link—is needed to organize the monitoring. At present, however, we only have the money to pay the salaries, and, then, only just enough. So most likely only a department in the central apparatus will be set up initially, with all the rest being created in stages.

Constitutional Court Issues

Constitutional Court Preparing Annual Report

OW0203180093 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1640 GMT 2 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The deputy chairman of the Russian Constitutional Court, Nikolay Vetruk, told Interfax on Tuesday [2 March] that the court was urgently preparing its annual report, which had to be approved by the end of the week. He said President Boris Yeltsin had expressed concern about the present situation and asked the Constitutional Court to give its opinion on how strictly the Constitution is observed, primarily as regards the separation of powers.

The report, Vetruk said, would mainly deal with three problems: separation of powers, human rights, and unity of the Russian Federation.

Last week, Yeltsin sent a letter to the Constitutional Court drawing the latter's attention to the deepening constitutional crisis in Russia and urging the court to finish work on its annual message, a document the court has to issue by law, as soon as possible.

Opposition's Constitutional Amendment Proposals Pondered

PM0303125593 Moscow ROSSIYSKIYE VESTI in Russian 3 Mar 93 p 1

[Lyubov Tsukanova report: "Long Live the Queen! This Is How the Parliamentary Opposition Would Like To Hail the President"]

[Text] A draft law on amendments to the Russian Federation Constitution concerning the president's powers, prepared by the "Russian Unity" bloc, has been submitted for consideration by Supreme Soviet committees and commissions. As perceived by the united opposition, the president, while remaining head of state, should not be head of executive power. The prerogative of forming the Cabinet of Ministers should switch to the head of government who is accountable to the legislature, while the right to ratify the appointments of the four senior ministers and the vice premiers remains vested in the Supreme Soviet.

The most radical members of "Russian unity" are inclined to altogether abolish the post of president, but their "moderate" associates would like (for the time being, at least) to retain the civilized image of power in Russia. At a session of the "Russian Unity" Coordinating Council, bloc leader Mikhail Astafyev explained to the most ardent deputies that the post of head of state exists in the majority of European countries "and it could be filled by a monarch or a president, this is unimportant." The important point is that he has no real power. What is the point of having him, then? Well, there has to be someone to receive ambassadors, hand out awards, sign instruments of clemency.... The president may even be left with the right to suggest a candidate for the post of head of government. But he cannot lead the government since, according to Mikhail Astafyev's assertion, "this is fraught with the danger of contradictions with the representative organ of power."

Thus, the draft law proposed by the opposition has become the first real response by a sizeable section of parliament to the president's initiative to conclude a constitutional accord, presupposing a halt to the process of "revamping" the Constitution to the advantage of any one branches of power until the new Fundamental Law is adopted. The opposition's countermove is well considered: Whatever happens, whether the law is adopted or not, its very discussion will deal a blow against the constitutional accord and will produce a fresh spiral of confrontation between the executive and the legislature. It is obvious that the president will not accept the role of a decorative ornament on the edifice of Russian statehood, nor will this be accepted by the supporters (mainly in parliament) of strong and personal executive power, because reforms cannot progress under the leadership of a collective organ which is not accountable not only because of its large size but also because of its political diversity.

What does this mean? It means that another political battle is in the offing. It means that the congress-assembly [syezd-veche] of the thousand voices will once more—at best—deliberate the question of what to do to improve the people's lot without changing anything in the process. At worst.... At worst it will heed Gennadiy Zyuganov, the communist-patriotic leader, who believes that Russian statehood must rest, as before, on the four pillars of soviets, ideology, state security, and the party.

Court Says Yeltsin's Disbanding of Front 'Unconstitutional'

OW1202140993 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1338 GMT 12 Feb 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] On Friday the Constitutional Court of Russia ruled that those provisions in President Boris Yeltsin's decree "On Measures To Defend Constitutional Order in the Russian Federation," according to which the organizational committee of the National Salvation Front was disbanded, were unconstitutional. In the court's opinion, the president violated the rights of citizens to voluntarily unite in social organizations. According to the court's verdict, such limitations may only be imposed by general courts on the basis of legislation.

In reference to the decree's use of "extremist elements," the court declared that this term "did not have a specific legal content, thus when implementing the decree, this could lead to the violation of citizens' constitutional rights." The court annulled the legal force of all normative acts passed on the basis of the president's decree "On Measures To Defend Constitutional Order in the Russian Federation." At the same time the court declared that the order to the Russian general prosecutor's office to investigate facts concerning the creation of militarized formations not envisioned by law, constitutional, and the internal affairs and security ministries have been given the job of implementing this ruling. [sentence as received]

The court also ruled on the constitutionality of the president's order to executive powers to immediately fulfil the demands of the Constitution on the inadmissibility of the creation and functioning of parties and organizations which aim to overthrow constitutional order, ignite nationalist and social dissent and carry out any other illegal actions "to the extent that they have the right to implement the appropriate powers within the Constitution and law." [sentence as received] The court has submitted a statement to the Russian president which indicates the necessity of improving legal study of any normative acts signed by the president.

Court Rules President Exceeded Powers Over NSF Case

LD1102130393 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1703 GMT 10 Feb 93

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Aleksandr Krasulin]

[Text] Moscow, 10 Feb (ITAR-TASS)—Today's Constitutional Court session heard statements by experts on verification of the constitutionality of the Russian Federation president's decree dissolving the National Salvation Front's [NSF] organizational committee. The experts noted that in this decree the president exceeded his powers and encroached on the areas of competence of other authorities. Nor did the experts observe any unconstitutional actions in the activities of the NSF organizational committee, just like the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the Ministry of Security, which failed to find grounds for criminal proceedings against this organization.

Addressing the evening session as a participant in the case, Justice Minister Nikolay Fedorov said that the head of the public and religious organizations department of the ministry who refused to register the NSF did not have the right to act in such a manner on behalf of the ministry. In this connection the question of his suitability for the post was raised. The minister suggested that the NSF's political council should make a new application to the Ministry of Justice for registration in accordance with the procedure.

The Constitutional Court will continue considering the case today.

Supreme Soviet

START II Treaty Sent to Committees for Discussion

No Objections Voiced

LD0103164993 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1602 GMT 1 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS parliamentary correspondent Ivan Novikov]

[Text] Moscow March 1 TASS—The Russian Parliament Presidium sent the START-2 Treaty between the United States and Russia to committees and commissions to prepare their conclusions. The Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty provides for considerable cuts in the nuclear arsenals of the two powers and substantial restrictions of the arms systems of the Russian Federation.

No objections to the treaty were voiced at the Parliament Presidium meeting and the resolution on the matter was passed without discussion. Along with this, the resolution noted that "in the interests of preparing the treaty for ratification, its expert evaluation is necessary from the military-political, military-strategic, military-technical and economic viewpoints".

Expert evaluation will be held in the form of parliamentary hearings which will take place after the Defence and Security Committee and the Committee for International Affairs and Foreign Economic Relations examine and summarize proposals made by their colleagues in parliament.

Parliamentary Hearings Begin

OW0203120193 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1146 GMT 2 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The first parliamentary hearings on the START-2 Treaty, signed on January 3 by Russian President Boris Yeltsin and then U.S. President George Bush, have begun in Moscow. Vice-Chairman of the Russian parliament, Nikolay Ryabov, said that the hearings will last for two months. He also said that the deputies will get acquainted with the military-political and military-economic aspects of the treaty and discuss the Russian Armed Forces' strategic development, as well as the terms of the START-2 Treaty.

The deputies will also draft the principles of Russia's nuclear policy and a program for the development of nuclear armaments. So far, new projects in this area are based on the programs adopted in the former Soviet Union, said Nikolay Ryabov.

On Tuesday [2 March], the deputies will be addressed by Russia's Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev and Chief of the Russian Armed Forces' General Staff, Mikhail Kolesnikov. They will speak about the basic provisions of the START-2 Treaty and analyze it from the political and legal points of view.

Chief of General Staff Comments

OW0203120993 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1147 GMT 2 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The START-2 Treaty meets both Russia's interests and international security standards, Chief of the Russian Armed Forces' General Staff, Mikhail Kolesnikov, said during the parliamentary hearings on the ratification of the START-2 Treaty.

Kolesnikov also noted that one could not assess that document from the point of view of "mere arithmetic." Today, nuclear armaments can only be viewed as weapons of deterrence, not as weapons of war, he added.

In his opinion, the START-2 Treaty will, first, make such deterrence efficient, and second, change the world attitude towards Russia's nuclear potential, which no longer poses any threat to the world, but is an element in the universal security system.

Kolesnikov pointed out that Russia's military doctrine which is being drafted at the moment, reflects the general tendency to cut down nuclear armaments. At the same time, he expressed serious concern about the fact that the more than 1000 nuclear warheads, still kept in Ukraine, are practically unmonitored, and that in view of this, radiation is a thousand times higher than the admissible level.

Speaking about Ukraine's position on the START-2 Treaty, Kolesnikov said that "Ukrainian politicians must understand that the course they have chosen will lead them to a dead end, and that they may become political outcasts.

Next November, the Russian armed forces will be confronted with serious problems connected with the forthcoming drafting campaign, said Kolesnikov. "We are moving towards catastrophe," he said. "Our borders will be unprotected because there is no one to replace the soldiers who have ended their service," he added.

Kozyrev Comments on Ratification

LD0203133093 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1302 GMT 2 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS diplomatic correspondent Leonid Timofeyev]

[Text] Moscow March 2 TASS—Russian Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev called on members of the Russian parliament to ratify the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START-2) between Russia and the United States, when he addressed the parliamentary hearings organised by the commissions for defence and foreign policy of the parliament today.

According to the minister, without ratifying the START-2 Treaty, Russia would return to confrontation with the entire world and the psychology of a besieged fortress.

Touching on Ukraine's attitude to the nuclear arms cuts, Andrey Kozyrev noted that the position of influential circles in Kiev both with regard to the START-1 and START-2 Treaties remains equivocal. This, according to the minister, caused apprehension both in Russia and in its partner countries. Ukraine is taking steps aimed at establishing control of the nuclear arms deployed on its territory. Kozyrev said Ukraine was seeking to keep these arms as long as possible.

"Kiev must understand that this policy can bring about more losses than illusory dividends", Kozyrev said. He expressed hope that the ratification of the START-2 Treaty by the Russian parliament would provide a positive impetus to Ukraine which would then ratify the START-1 Treaty.

Kozyrev on 'Nuclear Capitulation'

OW0203152493 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1453 GMT 2 Mar 93

[Report by diplomatic correspondents Andrey Borodin, Dmitriy Voskoboynikov and Igor Porshnev; from the "Diplomatic Panorama" feature—following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] There exists only one alternative to the START-2 treaty - "unilateral nuclear capitulation" by Russia or a return to a policy of confrontation with the United States, which would be "beyond our strength." The statement was made by Russian Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev on Tuesday [2 March] at open parliamentary hearings on the START-2 treaty. He emphasized that the treaty not only "takes us out of the arms race, but also does not plunge us into a disarmament race."

The minister said that the treaty takes the economic interests of Russia into complete account, allows the establishment of a new level of strategic stability, and offers the opportunity to reform Russia's strategic nuclear forces.

In addition, noted Kozyrev, START-2 puts and end to "the nuclear ambitions of various states, and encourages their joining the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty." "To refuse START-2 would mean calling START-1 into doubt," emphasized the minister.

In his opinion, even if START-2 is not signed, Russia would undertake a unilateral reduction of its nuclear armaments, since in the last years of its existence, the former USSR was obviously in no condition to sustain the arms race.

In Kozyrev's view, "to give up START-2 would also mean to resume confrontation with the entire world and return to the besieged fortress psychology."

However, START-2 is not the price Russia has to pay for its cooperation with the USA. The treaty reflects the new spirit of partnership between the two countries and if it is not ratified the situation can only worsen. If this happens, Kozyrev said, certain forces in the USA might start encouraging such "mythical countries" as Ukranaina to get hold of nuclear weapons.

Kozyrev explained that the reason why the START-2 treaty was drawn up and signed so quickly is due to the fact that the volume of technical work was cut by 90

, since START-2 is 90

based on the START-1 treaty.

According to the foreign minister, essentially there is no alternative concept to the START-2 treaty, except open confrontation. As far as the confrontational concept is concerned, it proceeds from the assumption that a nuclear conflict between Russia and the USA, based on the principle "who beats whom" and "who launches the first strike," is inevitable.

This concept is "inertia of the past," "a conceptual trap" we got caught in during the arms race, Kozyrev said. "This logic is unacceptable now," he stressed.

According to the foreign minister, one of the foremost tasks now is to strengthen the nuclear arms non-proliferation regime. Nuclear weapons, he pointed out, can be acquired primarily by countries situated not far from Russia's southern borders, the area that harbors the greatest danger of all kinds of ethnic conflicts to Russia.

Kozyrev paid particular attention to the stance taken by Ukraine, the only republic that has not ratified the START-1 treaty to this day. According to him, "the attitude of influential circles in Kiev to START-1 and to START-2 continues to be ambiguous." It makes Russia and its partners concerned, he stressed.

According to Kozyrev, Kiev is taking steps that are actually aimed at establishing control over nuclear weapons deployed on Ukrainian soil. The reason for this is to keep these weapons in Ukraine as long as possible. In this connection Russia's foreign minister pointed out that as a result of such policy Ukraine might sustain great losses rather than derive "some illusory dividends." If Russia's Parliament ratifies START-2, this will serve as an incentive for Ukraine to strictly comply with the START-1 provisions, he said.

Opening the hearings, Deputy Speaker Nikolay Ryabov said they will continue for at least two months, and the legislators will be gathering at least once every two weeks.

According to Ryabov, "the concrete foundations of our nuclear policy are virtually nonexistent." Therefore, the deputy speaker said, it's expedient to consider not only the issues connected with the ratification of the START-2 treaty, but also define the basic parameters of Russia's nuclear policy, so that they could be reviewed by the Parliament later.

Opposition Leader Reacts

OW0203175493 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1639 GMT 2 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] If the START-2 Treaty is implemented, the United States will become 36 times more powerful militarily than Russia. This was stated at parliamentary hearings in the Russian House of Councils by retired Lieutenant-General Boris Tarasov, leader of the Fatherland oppositional faction. Voicing his opposition to the Supreme Soviet's ratification of the treaty, he stressed that implementing START-2 would cost "tens of trillions of rubles."

Nikolay Pavlov, one of the leaders of the Russian Unity oppositional bloc, said the Russian Foreign Ministry's doctrine on START-2 was "utopian" and claimed that the country's higher military leadership, which today supports this doctrine, "will be kicking themselves in a few years." Pavlov said that the nuclear arms reductions which START-2 stipulates "will cause rebellion among Russian troops."

Andrey Golovin, a leader of the "Change - New Policy" faction, said that START-2 "is primarily beneficial to the USA and does not correspond to Russia's interests." He feels that if the treaty is implemented, in 10 years parity in the military sector will be lost, and Russia will become dependent on the United States.

More on Hearings

PM0303120793 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 3 Mar 93 p 1

[Vladimir Yermolin report: "Hearings on START II Held at Russian Federation Supreme Soviet"]

[Text] These are not the first hearings on the START II Treaty. As people will know, the treaty submitted for ratification has had a far from unanimous reception from deputies and has generated considerable discussion among not just professional military men but politicians too. Today's hearings proceeded in the same vein as the preceding ones. The position of the Foreign Ministry (Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev) and the Defense Ministry (Colonel General Mikhail Kolesnikov, chief of the Russian Federation Joint Armed Forces General Staff) was presented on the one hand, while on the other, in the role of opponents, there was Iona Andronov, deputy chairman of the parliamentary Committee for International Affairs, the "Russian Unity" parliamentary bloc, and the "Change-New Policy" faction.

Nikolay Ryabov, deputy chairman of the Russian Federation Supreme Soviet, who chaired the first half of the hearings, noted in his opening remarks that the present-day stage possesses a number of features which have to be taken account of in assessing START II. First, the Treaty on the Nonproliferation of Nuclear Weapons runs out in 1995. In these conditions all five nuclear powers must adopt uniform stances. Second, analysis shows a quantitative increase in nuclear armaments in countries which are not bound by treaty limitations (500-600 strategic nuclear warheads by the year 2000). That is to say, the sooner everyone sits down at the negotiating table, the better. Ryabov stressed that the example of Ukraine, Kazakhstan, and Belarus shows that it is far more difficult for five powers to reach agreement than two. The third feature resides in our internal problems in elaborating a validated nuclear policy and Russian nuclear arms program. Therefore, in Ryabov's opinion, during the process of the hearings on the START II Treaty it is advisable not only to examine the questions of its ratification but also to determine the basic provisions of Russian Federation nuclear policy and submit them to the Supreme Soviet.

The hearings have shown that critics of the treaty are most put out by what they see as a lack of guarantees that the United States is altering its military doctrine toward Russia as the legal successer to the USSR. Nikolay Ryabov asked the foreign minister to prepare an appropriate information report providing documentary corroboration of positive changes in U.S. military policy toward Russia and similar processes within NATO. Clearly, we are talking about a kind of list of specific steps which show that no one is intending to talk to Russia from a position of strength.

Council Rejects Opposition Proposal on Yeltsin Statement

OW0303115793 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1140 GMT 3 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] On Wednesday [3 March], the Russian parliament's Council of the Republic turned down the proposal by Vladimir Isakov, a leader of the Russian Unity parliamentary opposition alliance, that the Constitutional Court should make an assessment of Boris Yeltsin's statement made on March 2, during the conference of the Democratic Choice alliance.

Isakov said that the president showed disrespect for the constitution by saying that he does find it necessary to observe the constitution, amended by the 6th and 7th congress of people's deputies. Isakov believes that the Constitutional Court should assess not only the president's statement, but also his actions.

Interfax's parliamentary correspondent reports that during the morning session, Deputy Ivan Galushko asked the chairman of the Council of the Republic, Veniamin Sokolov, why the Council of the Republic's leaders had circulated the telegram which said that the congress would open on March 10, if the parliament had not taken any decision on the date of the congress.

Sokolov explained that the parliament would discuss the date of the congress on March 4 and added that if the date, March 10, was not confirmed, "all telegrams will lose their meaning." Meanwhile, on the initiative of Vladimir Podoprigora, a member of the parliament's presidium, the Council of Nationalities refused to discuss the date of the extraordinary congress of people's deputies, or its agenda on Wednesday morning. Podoprigora explained his initiative by the fact that the deputies had already received the telegram by the parliament's Vice-Chairman Yuriy Voronin which said that the congress would begin on March 10.

Podoprigora also said that the parliament had taken no decisions concerning the date of the congress. He also said that the joint discussion of the date by the parliament's chambers will hardly be quiet.

Legislation Committee Endorses 'Power Sharing' Bill

OW0203172893 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1638 GMT 2 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The Russian Supreme Soviet's Legislation Committee has endorsed a bill worked out by Mikhail Mityukov, its Chairman, on amendments of and addenda to the existing Constitution on power sharing between the legislative and executive branches.

The Mityukov bill would invalidate the Seventh Congress of People's Deputies resolution on stabilizing the constitutional order.

According to the bill, the Russian Federation President is, as the head of state, the chief official and chief executive.

Nominations of Foreign, Defense, Security, and Interior Ministers would not be confirmed unless decisions on them were made by appropriate standing commissions and parliamentary committees of the Houses.

By a new clause the Supreme Soviet would confirm the nomination of the Central Bank of Russia with the president's consent. The president would also nominate the higher chamber of state supervision for parliament to confirm.

'Army Reform' Deputies Debate Army Problems

PM0203124793 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 2 Mar 93 First Edition p 2

[ITAR-TASS report: "Our Army Is in Need of Reforms"]

[Text] The Russian Army is in need of a profound reform—that is the conclusion reached by the people's deputies taking part in the parliamentary hearings held yesterday in the Russian White House. They were held by the "Army Reform" deputies' group.

As Deputy Vitaliy Urazhtsev, senior coordinator of the group, announced, the discussion of the question of the progress of reform in the army was preceded by a large amount of work connected with the study of the state of affairs in army units and formations and with the travel to the regions of the troops' deployment and places of residence of the servicemen and members of their families. The parliamentarians' overall conclusion is not reassuring. The state of the Russian armed forces remains grave, the deputies' group leader stressed. He said that hundreds of thousands of servicemen have no social protection or rights. Tyranny, theft, and corruption continue to flourish in the army, the deputy asserts. "And the military department is covering up for its villains," Vitaliy Urazhtsev stressed.

The plight of the Russian servicemen in the Baltic states is particularly grave, the speakers said. Thousands of military families remain in the Baltic states without housing, without citizenship, and without work. The fate of the veterans is also unenviable: Some 80 percent of their pension goes on rent. Under these conditions the troops' combat readiness and martial discipline are declining, the deputies noted.

Nor is all well with the military men who are being redeployed to Russia from abroad. Deputy Vladimir Anishchev, one of the coordinators of the "Army Reform" group, noted that the Defense Ministry is "embellishing the picture." He stated that the heads of the administrations of those regions where the Russian troops are being introduced "have a tendency to gear their problems toward military money," in other words, to release this money for other purposes.

Yuriy Yudin, leader of the commission for the investigation of crimes in the army, created under this parliamentary group, insisted that parliament should accelerate the drafting of the draft law on corruption. He cited a number of facts to support his conclusion that "corruption has seized hold of the army in all regions."

The parliamentarians concluded that the demands of the seventh Congress of People's Deputies for "the reforming of the Russian armed forces in the direction of creating an army of a democratic state are not being fulfilled." On the contrary, the deputies stated, there is a strengthening trend toward a return toward totalitarianism and the old procedures. The participants in the hearings drew the unanimous conclusion that the Defense Ministry leadership is failing to cope with the commitments imposed on it.

Chambers To Discuss Freedom of Assembly, Public Events

LD0303100793 Moscow Ostankino Television First Channel Network in Russian 0900 GMT 3 Mar 93

[By correspondent M. Vasilyeva; from the "Novosti" newscast]

[Text] Separate chambers of the chambers are being held in the Russian parliament today. In its morning session, the Soviet of the Republic discussed ways of improving its work. During the course of the week, deputies have been tabling proposals on improving the work of the chamber. Venyamin Sokolov, the chairman of the Soviet of the Republic, explained them in general terms. In particular, it has been decided to include in the Soviet of the Republic's work schedule weekly hearings on socioeconomic policy, which, according to the chamber's chairman, would be of assistance in getting a better idea of what is really happening in the country and to determine its attitude to policy.

Both chambers—the Soviet of Nationalities and the Soviet of the Republic—today plan to examine in the first reading a draft law on freedom of meetings, demonstrations, and public events, and also to introduce changes and additions to the Law of the Russian Federation's judicial system and to the Criminal and Crime Procedure Codes.

Official Comments on Sending Troops to Tajikistan

PM0203120193 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 2 Mar 93 p 2

[Interview with A.Yu. Tsarev, chairman of Armed Forces Subcommittee under Russian Federation Parliamentary Committee on Defense and Security, by Igor Lenskiy; place and date not given: "Difficult But Necessary Choice"—first paragraph is introduction]

[Text] Today the Russian Federation Parliamentary Committee on Defense and Security will at last discuss Tajikistan's request for the southern border to be reinforced. Although the CIS heads of state reached an agreement in principle in Minsk as long ago as 22 January, its implementation has encountered opposition in the Russian parliament. PRAVDA's correspondent talks with A. Tsarev, chairman of the Armed Forces Subcommittee.

"Until this agreement has been ratified by the Supreme Soviet, our military will not send troops to Tajikistan and will be acting correctly," Aleksey Yuryevich believes. "Are you thinking of just sending guys and then getting zinc coffins? How could you look mothers in the eye then?"

[Lenskiy] But the presidents have signed....

[Tsarev] Can such things really be entrusted to them?! They conclude 15 such agreements every day! Just read what is written there! Is this really in Russia's interests? Our committee has come up with a negative decision on many documents.

[Lenskiy] What about the collective security treaty?

[Tsarev] A positive decision.

[Lenskiy] But the need to help Tajikistan stems from it! An Uzbek battalion has already arrived at the border.

[Tsarev] Military assistance is given to a foreign state in accordance with the Law on Defense. This law does not yet exist. The Russian Federation's armed forces can be outside Russia only with the Supreme Soviet's approval. Frankly speaking, I see no benefit in ratifying the Minsk decision. [Tsarev ends]

Tsarev's position brings us really close not so much even to a political problem as to a very complex moral problem: In what cases is a risk to human life justified, and in what cases is it not justified? I believe that, while very strictly complying with the principle of voluntariness, all the same we should not forget that protection of the CIS borders is not only important for Tajikistan but also accords with Russia's national interests. Tsarev overlooks this central point. Nevertheless, his other question is legitimate: Who will pay for the costly action? Clearly, Tajikistan cannot afford it. It is a burden even for Russia. Although, if you look closely into it, a breach of the southern border of the CIS could cause worse damage than any expenditure can.

Parliament Debates Referendum Issue

MK2602131693 Moscow NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA in Russian 26 Feb 93 p 1

[Ivan Rodin article: "Referendum or Life (Death, Congress)? Underline the Right Option"]

[Text] The Supreme Soviet has again felt the rough hand of its speaker. The joint session of the two houses on 25 February was presided over by Ruslan Khasbulatov after his brief absence. He forced through an agenda that had nothing to do with the referendum, the constitutional agreement, or the extraordinary congress, preventing these questions from being included in it.

Mr. Khasbulatov, reasoning with unyielding deputies, told them that at present there is a powerful movement supporting the convocation of the congress and the cessation of all preparations for the referendum. The speaker briefly outlined the history of the emergence of that movement: from the statement by heads of kray and oblast administrations, to rejection by the republican leaders, and then the complete rejection of the referendum idea by the chairmen of soviets in Novosibirsk. "This was no accident, because people in the provinces are better aware of the consequences than we are," Khasbulatov said. The consequence that is seen so clearly from the Russian hinterland is, according to the speaker, the disintegration of Russia, like the disintegration of the Union following the 17 March 1991 referendum.

"Like it or not, we are in a situation where we have to call a congress," the Supreme Soviet chairman declared. The congress will cancel the referendum, however, and that would mean that the people are not trusted, Khasbulatov thinks. That was why he voiced the idea in Novosibirsk of simultaneous presidential and parliamentary elections in the spring of 1994, which could be reflected in the upcoming constitutional agreement.

Ruslan Khasbulatov then reiterated his idea about the duality of executive power, which is perilous to the country, and suggested that the question about a strong government should also be provided for in the agreement with the president. He then started trying to persuade the deputies to postpone the final decision on holding an extraordinary congress until 4 March. At the same time, he agreed that the congress could well be held on 9 and 10 March.

Ruslan Khasbulatov quickly cut short an argument that began over the presidential version of the constitutional agreement and the parliamentary part of the commission responsible for its preparation that had not yet been approved by the Supreme Soviet, and therefore had no negotiating powers. He decried Yeltsin's initiatives as "strange, to put it mildly," and suggested recognizing the deputies group led by Nikolay Ryabov, since it was already participating in the talks. In an effort to shout down certain deputies, Khasbulatov several times described Vladimir Isakov as a member of that commission, although the latter had never been included in it. Deputy Isakov himself said that he wanted to take issue with that, because he did not support the idea of agreement with the president. He yielded to persuasion from his opposition colleagues, however, and did not go to the microphone. The deputies group was therefore left without powers, while the vote to include all the questions related to the Constitution and referendum in the 25 February session did not bring victory to its supporters.

The "democratically minded" deputies believe that a week's pause gives Ruslan Khasbulatov a good opportunity to maneuver or do some behind the scenes bargaining with the president. Furthermore, they suppose that Khasbulatov liked the suggestion from Deputy Golovin to wait until Yeltsin officially asks for the congress to be convened. The opposition Russian Unity group also thinks that the decision to postpone discussion of the congress issue was influenced by the speaker's personal interests. It is noteworthy that some "democrats" insisted on a speedy discussion of the date for the next extraordinary forum. Deputy Baburin, on the hand, supported Khasbulatov.

A little later it became clear why the opposition did not care when the date of the congress should be discussed. At an open session of the Russian Unity bloc, Vladimir Isakov read out a draft Supreme Soviet decree drawn up for the 25 February session. It contained three points: First, the attempts to reach a constitutional agreement are to be deemed unconstitutional; second, considering the views of the Federation subjects and the fact that the Supreme Soviet has not received any questions for the referendum from the president, parliament will be prohibited from allocating funds for its preparation; and third, the extraordinary eighth congress should be held on 17 March. The opposition also drafted two versions for the congress agenda. According to the "soft" version, the decree of the previous 12 December congress is to be abrogated and early presidential and deputies elections held, while parliament is instructed to pass a new election law. Likewise, additional members of the Constitutional Court and deputies of the Supreme Soviet chairman will be elected. The "tough" version provides for the speaker's resignation, removal of the president from office, and the discussion of measures to stabilize the socioeconomic situation in the country, which should result in the introduction of a state of emergency in the economy. Then, the opposition believes, the Constitution should be changed so as to strengthen the role of the government.

On 25 February, a new version of the presidential "Constitutional Agreement" (bearing the note: "Replacing the previous one") was circulated in the Supreme Soviet. Compared with the previous draft, this one does not contain any politically significant changes.

Supreme Soviet Accepts Yeltsin Position on VAT Law

MK2602141693 Moscow KOMMERSANT-DAILY in Russian 26 Feb 93 p 3

[Dmitriy Kamin report: "Parliament Admits President Is Right"]

[Text] The Russian parliament has relaxed its position on the issue of taxing goods exported to the CIS countries. Following an energetic protest from the president, who accused the parliament of seeking to interfere in the internal affairs of neighboring states, the Supreme Soviet at its session yesterday adopted a softer version of the law "On Amendments to the Law 'On Value-Added Tax.'"

The president's negative reaction was provoked by Article 1 of the law whereby an increased value-added tax [VAT] rate was imposed automatically on goods and services delivered from Russia to CIS countries. That step was motivated by the fact that tax rates in a number of Commonwealth states are higher than in Russia. The situation was regarded as economically detrimental to Russia, insofar as the advocates of higher tax rates on goods and services supplied to the neighboring states thought that Russia's budget was losing billions of rubles owing to the differences in the tax regimes of the CIS countries. The president assessed this decision by parliament as an attempt to exert pressure by force on the formation of national tax laws in the Commonwealth countries. Yeltsin pointed here to the legal inappropriateness of a text that, in his opinion, fixed a higher tax rate on exported Russian goods than on those designed for domestic consumption (including imported goods). In this context the president cited the law on foreign investments, under which conditions of economic activity for non-residents in Russia may not be less favorable than for the residents.

Following a repeat consideration of the law, the parliament accepted the president's suggestion that specific procedures for applying tax in Russia with regard to goods exported to and imported from the CIS states should be established by interstate agreements. It is only in the absence of such agreements that the Russian parliament may set a tax rate on a reciprocal basis with respect to each individual CIS state.

Khasbulatov's Views on Constitutional Accord Eyed

PM2602163193 Moscow ROSSIYSKIYE VESTI in Russian 20 Feb 93 p 1

[Unattributed report: "On the Draft Constitutional Agreement," followed by Andrey Kolesnikov "Commentary": "Compromises to Which No End Is in Sight"]

[Excerpts] Supreme Soviet Chairman Ruslan Khasbulatov:

I have rather a cool attitude to the concept of the Constitutional Agreement. The concept of the Constitutional Agreement comes under the "mediocre" category, and "it is not worth expecting any salutary or messianic role" of it. We must not allow ourselves to be distracted from urgent matters by initiatives which are not particularly significant, like the draft Constitutional Agreement, and which only stir up public opinion and involve society in idle discussions.

Nevertheless, he made a number of proposals which, from what he said, could become the basis of the Constitutional Agreement. The Congress should adopt a number of amendments to the Constitution. In particular, the amendments should eliminate the two-tier nature of representative power. The president should be declared head of state. At a constitutional level, it is proposed that the legal norm on the exclusive accountability of the Government to the Supreme Soviet be enshrined. R. Khasbulatov stressed that if his proposals are adopted, the principle of the separation of powers will be implemented and the "duality of the present executive will disappear." [passage omitted]

Viktor Sheynis, coordinator of the "Accord for Progress" faction:

To my mind, a number of points in the president's version of the Constitutional Agreement are of a somewhat vague nature. But the main thing is that this document contains a number of provisions which evoke certain doubts and objections even in me—although I unfailingly support the president—never mind in the majority of Supreme Soviet members. If they are adopted, representative power will to a significant extent lose the role which it has been called upon to carry out in our difficult times. I am not laboring under any illusions over the present composition of the parliament, but for me the actual idea of parliamentarianism and the preservation of the seaparation of powers is extremely important.

Commentary: Compromises to Which No End Is in Sight

The authorities are preparing a new compromise—the Constitutional Agreement. If the compromise is reached, which, incidentally, is not definite since the two working groups have completely different approaches toward resolving the power crisis, then the previous agreement is annulled, and the referendum will be canceled.

The "unbearable lightness" with which certain politicians have "disowned" the decision that they themselves took, may spread to the new agreement too. In any case even if, as S. Shakhray noted, the constitutional court becomes the guarantor of a "peace treaty," there is no certainty that, for instance, the legislature will not suddenly feel like repudiating the agreement on a unilateral basis.

The question of the legal nature, or if you like, the juridical status of the Constitutional Agreement remains one of the main issues. The delimitation of the authorities' powers, and the precise definition of sanctions for the violation of the agreement can already be talked about entirely legitimately. But unfortunately, the Constitutional Agreement is not an Interim Constitutional Law. And after all, such status would allow it to acquire the significance of a genuine constitutional act.

There is another side to this. The Constitutional Agreement will not solve the problem of the Congress, and this means the question of the normal implementation of the principle of the separation of powers. Conversely, the Congress will scarcely solve the problem of the Constitutional Agreement, since the degree of conservatism of the "large parliament" exceeds even the conservatism of the Supreme Soviet.

So what will this agreement give the authorities and the people? Everyone is speaking in unison about the fact that a Constitution cannot be adopted in the present situation. But no one is pondering the fact that if a new "humane" Constitution was already operating in our country, there would at least be no problems with the separation of the branches of power and there would be no need for the endless train of compromises disappearing over the horizon.

Abdulatipov, Shakhray at Nationalities Policy Hearings

PM0103114393 Moscow ROSSIYSKIYE VESTI in Russian 24 Feb 93 p 1

[Unattributed report: "The State Committee for Nationalities' Main Task Will Not Be an Abstract Nationalities Policy, But Strict Implementation of the Federation Treaty. So Believes Its Chairman, Sergey Shakhray"]

[Text] It is essential "to turn the multinational composition of Russian society from a potential weakness of the state into its strength and support," Vice Premier Sergey Shakhray stated at parliamentary hearings on the theme "The Integrity of the Russian Federation and Regional Policy," held on Monday. Ramazan Adulatipov, Grigoriy Yavlinskiy, and Foreign Economic Relations Minister Sergey Glazyev also spoke at the hearings. Soviet of Nationalities Chairman R. Abdulatipov, speaking of the trends in the regional policy of federal organs of power, noted that a policy of supercentralization is still being carried out with regard to the regions, but at the same time the "loosening of state power" is continuing. S. Glazyev stated that components of the Federation cannot have their own special trade regimes. The minister also said that there are many cases where Russia has been dealt serious economic damage because of inexpert conduct of foreign economic activity at local level. MVD [Ministry of Internal Affairs] Main Administration Chief Vyacheslav Ogorodnikov spoke of the threat to Russia's integrity and security from numerous nationalist movements and groups, and said that there are more than 150 organizations setting up parallel structures of power and delivering ultimatums on secession from the Russian Federation. In Ogorodnikov's words, a serious problem is presented by Pan-Turkism and Pan-Islamism.

The central event of the hearings was, of course, the speech by Sergey Shakhray, chairman of the State Committee for Federation and Nationalities Affairs. The vice premier set forth his vision of a nationalities policy concept based on the equal rights of all peoples dwelling in the Russian Federation. It is essential, while recognizing the right of nations to self-determination, to constantly link it with recognition of the priority of individual rights, irrespective of nationality. "But we must say without embarrassment that the prosperity of all other nations of the Russian Federation depends on the general state and prosperity of the Russian people.... Neglected as it has been in all respects, the Russian nation could be the detonator which blows multinational Russia apart." Judging by Shakhray's speech, the State Committee for Nationalities is proceeding "from words to action," and is ready to engage in, not an abstract nationalities policy, but the implementation of the Federation Treaty. Sergey Shakhray considers the most important task to be the preservation of the unity and integrity of the Russian Federation.

Parliament's Foreign Policy Role Defended

MK2502080193 Moscow MOSKOVSKIYE NOVOSTI in Russian No.9, 28 Feb 93 p A14

[Interview with Yevgeniy Ambartsumov, chairman of the Russian Supreme Soviet Committee for International and Foreign Economic Relations, by Aleksey Pushkov; place and date not given: "Parliament and Foreign Ministry: Coming Closer Together?"; first passage is correspondent's introduction]

[Text] During the last month the Supreme Soviet has twice summoned Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev to hear his views on foreign policy matters. Both times the discussions were held in a surprisingly calm tone. Does this mean that the confrontation between the Foreign Ministry and the Supreme Soviet has eased? And what are the reasons behind this shift? Yevgeniy Ambartsumov, chairman of the parliamentary Committee for International and Foreign Economic Relations, comments on this in a MOSKOVSKIYE NOVOSTI interview. Since being elected chairman last spring, Ambartsumov has become one of the central figures shaping Russia's foreign policy course. The MOSKOVSKIYE NOVOSTI editorial board is pleased to note that, along with Yuriy Ryzhov, Russian ambassador to France, who has become a member of the Presidential Council, he continues as a MOSKOVSKIYE NOVOSTI founder.

[Pushkov] Yevgeniy Arshakovich, how would you explain the fact that Andrey Kozyrev's latest speech in parliament, where he is known to have a lot of opponents, has not caused heated debate? Is is due to a waning interest in foreign policy, a change of attitude to the Foreign Ministry line, or the fact that the desire to secure Kozyrev's resignation has moderated?

[Ambartsumov] Foreign policy continues to hold great interest for the Supreme Soviet. The reason lies elsewhere. Russia's foreign policy, as it was initially formulated, was somewhat naive and utopian. It was believed that, because Russia had become a democratic country, it should by treated accordingly by everyone and that it would forge equally good ties with everyone. However, it immediately became clear that in relations with the CIS counties it was just not enough to simply recognize their sovereignty and independence. It turned out that the outside world was pretty tough and pragmatic and that we also had to proceed primarily on the basis of our own interests.

The fact that the struggle between "the two camps" is over and we are no longer in a state of confrontation with the U.S. and the West does not mean that the simplest way to go is to copy their policies. It is for copying the American "big brother's" course that the Supreme Soviet and our committee have been critical of the

Foreign Ministry leadership. As well as for unjustified, improvised actions and for their failure to coordinate the most important foreign policy steps with parliament. It is not because we are more professional than they are. There are around 3,000 employees at the Foreign Ministry, whereas we on the committee have only a few people on our staff. It is simply that deputies are directly linked with their voters and are pretty acutely aware of their mood, even if they may not always convey that mood adequately.

It should be said that changes in the Foreign Ministry line have occurred—on Yugoslavia, for example—under the influence of this criticism, even though it was taken in a very negative way at first by the ministry leadership.

[Pushkov] Does this mean that peace or at least a temporary truce has broken out between the Supreme Soviet and the Foreign Ministry?

[Ambartsumov] Kozyrev's latest speech—not so much the speech itself as his answers to questions—was the most successful of all his speeches in our parliament. He showed both a good knowledge of the problems and a convincing line of argument, particularly considering that some of the deputies' attacks were prompted by insufficient information about real shifts in the Foreign Ministry approach. As a result, some of the deputies who were inclined to be uncompromising toward the minister even piped down. But let us not forget that it was not a full-blown discussion that was intended here, but just answers to questions.

Of course, the political struggle will continue. Kozyrev has been drawn into this—largely, by the way, because of his unnecessary participation in the political infighting, as I have repeatedly told him. But that seems to have occurred to a large extent under pressure from Burbulis, who has now gone...

[Pushkov] How do you evaluate the new U.S. Administration's approaches in this connection?

[Ambartsumov] During my recent meeting with Reginald Bartholomew, President Clinton's special envoy on the Yugoslav problem, I told him that we were glad that American policy had proclaimed human rights its primary guideline. This is also important for us with respect to our countrymen living abroad. I stressed, too, that we consider ourselves part of the world democratic community, but this does not mean that we should copy all U.S. approaches, particularly on Yugoslavia.

Judging from Bartholomew's words, the Americans do understand that a number of international knots cannot be disentangled without Russia' participation—notably Yugoslavia, but the Middle East also. And they cannot count on Russia to follow in the U.S. wake.

[Pushkov] Do you believe that the international community should now lift the sanctions against Serbia?

[Ambartsumov] What is important in the first place is to achieve a cease-fire and establish an uninterrupted negotiating process. Obviously the Croats' offensive against Serbian Krajina must be stopped, the more so because they have thrown back the "blue helmets" who were separating them from the Serbs' forces. It is also obvious that economic sanctions should be lifted. First, they never achieve results. Second and most important, the Union Republic of Yugoslavia, i.e. Serbia and Montenegro, is not taking part in the hostilities.

[Pushkov] But can Russia and the United States reach accord on Yugoslavia given that the United States seems to have no intention of abandoning its increasingly tough line with respect to Serbia, whereas Russia, on the contrary, is willing to soften its stance?

[Ambartsumov] I think they can. There are a few things in the American stance that can be explained by ignorance of the real state of affairs. Vance and Owen are against intervention. As a matter of fact, Owen initially favored tough action to resolve the question, but he has gradually moved away from that position. Another question is: Who in practice is going to do the fighting? Common sense tells us that the military path is no way out of the situation.

[Pushkov] Your position on a number of issues is such that you are criticized by both the intransigent opposition and radical democrats. What do you make of this dual criticism?

[Ambartsumov] First of all, it is the parliament's task to supervise and criticize the government in order to help improve its work. On the other hand, I do not think it expedient for a committee chairman or a committee to try to undermine the government or a particular minister. Whether we like a department leader or not, we have to cooperate with him as long as he is appointed by the president.

Regional Affairs

Chechnya Opposes Curfew in Neighboring Ingush Regions

LD0203181893 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1622 GMT 2 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Sharip Asuyev]

[Text] Groznyy March 2 TASS—Chechen President Dzhokhar Dudayev opposed the introduction on Tuesday [2 March] of a curfew in two regions in the neighboring Ingush Republic and said that Russian statements about aggravation of the situation in Chechnya are groundless.

By these statements "the Russian side attempts to justify not only the curfew, but also other anti-Chechen measures undertaken by it of late", his press service said in a statement, adding that the measures might be aimed also against the Russian Parliament speaker, who is a Chechen.

"Facts testify that Russia is evidently planning a new series of aggressive actions against the Chechen Republic. Moreover, such actions on the eve of the coming Congress of Russian People's Deputies show that some forces in Moscow try to play the so-called "Chechen card" in Russian big politics. It is not excluded that (the card will be played) against head of legislative authority, a Chechen by nationality", the press service said referring to Ruslan Khasbulatov.

The curfew in Malgobek and Sunzhen regions was introduced on March 1 by Aleksandr Kotenkov, head of the temporary administration in North Ossetia and Ingushetia, in connection with the aggravation of political situation in the Chechen Republic, the increased number of provocations from the armed groups of that republic and the deteriorating crime rate in the region.

On February 28 an explosion in a passenger train on the territory of Chechnya claimed many lives. The Russian Security Ministry rejected the statement of several mass media which quoted Dudayev as accusing Russian secret services of the act of terrorism.

However, Dudayev's press service continues to insist that "it was from the territory of Russia that the explosion of a passenger car was organised on the territory of Chechnya. Units of Chechen police and security forces are doing everything possible to preserve calm in regions bordering on Ingushetia", it said in the statement received by TASS in Groznyy.

Chechen Parliament Lifts Curfew, State of Emergency

LD0203172193 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 1100 GMT 2 Mar 93

[Report by correspondent R. Khadzhiyev from Groznyy; from the "Vesti" newscast]

[Excerpt] During one of its most recent sessions, the parliament of the Chechen Republic lifted President Dzhokhar Dudayev's decree extending the curfew and state of emergency. Deputies and skeptics believe that the decree had achieved little to stem rising crime levels. [passage omitted]

Further on Kislovodsk-Baku 28 Feb Train Explosion

OW0103142293 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1402 GMT 1 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Ivan Fadyushin, the leader of an operative-investigation group of the Russian Interior Ministry, reported that according to more precise information, 11 people were killed and 18 wounded as a result of an explosion in the passenger train Kislovodsk-Baku on Sunday [28 February]. On Monday Fadyushin appeared at a briefing in Vladikavkaz.

The explosion occurred at 7:25 on February 28 in one of the train's cars during the approach to the Gudermes train station in Chechnya.

Earlier, Chechnya's law enforcement bodies had reported that 13 people were killed and 12 wounded due to the explosion.

Security Ministry Denies Involvement

LD0203161893 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1521 GMT 2 Mar 93

[By CRIME PRESS correspondent Pavel Ovchinnikov for TASS]

[Text] Moscow March 2 TASS—"Allegations made by leaders of the Chechen Republic that Russian secret services were involved in the Kislovodsk-Baku passenger train explosion are absolutely groundless and even absurd," a spokesman for the Russian Ministry of Security said on Tuesday [2 March]. This terroristic act, carried out near the Gudermes railway station in Chechenya on Sunday, killing 13 and injuring 12 passengers.

The Russian Ministry of Security reported that in 1992 there were over 240 explosions in Russia carried out by criminals, killing some 34 people and injuring 144.

Viktor Barannikov, Russian minister for security, said at a meeting of the ministry's collegium in February that the growing terrorism in Russia was caused by the worsening of socio-economic situation, the aggravation of ethnic conflicts and political confrontation in a number of CIS countries and some regions in Southern Russia.

The Russian Ministry of Security has resolutely denied lies spread in connection with the tragic incident and said it was prepared to render assistance in the investigation into the explosion.

Aleksey Kandaurov, deputy chief of a department of the Russian Security Ministry, told a correspondent of CRIME PRESS News Agency that an appeal made by Azeri leaders to pool efforts in combating terrorism and circulated by AZERTAJ News Agency on Monday night, has been met with understanding and supported by the Russian Ministry of Security.

"We are always prepared for constructive cooperation in combating this evil," the official said.

Further Reaction to Train Explosion

PM0303112593 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 2 Mar 93 p 6

[Igor Andreyev report: "Bombs in Passenger Cars"]

[Text] Major incidents some two days apart took place on passenger trains in the Caucasus. On Friday [26 February] morning an explosive device went off under a train on the Tbilisi-Yerevan route in Georgia's Marneulskiy Rayon. On Sunday one of the cars of the Kislovodsk-Baku train exploded near Gudermes station (Chechnya).

ITAR-TASS reported from Tbilisi that it was saboteurs who blew up the track underneath the Tbilisi-Yerevan train. Two cars overturned and two left the rails. According to information from the Georgian transport police, there were no fatalities, but 250 meters of track, which carries vitally important cargoes to Armenia, were damaged.

According to information from INTERFAX several people were wounded. The train's engineer said that there were two explosions beneath the train: one directly underneath the electric locomotive, and a second underneath the second or third car.

According to a report from the NEGA news agency, Armenian Government Press Secretary V. Manoyan is disputing the version of events which holds that an explosive took place. In his words the information to that effect "was premature or even erroneous."

The incident in Chechnya involving the train from Kislovodsk to Baku ended tragically. According to the latest figures, 10 people were killed and 15 wounded as a result of an explosion in one of the cars.

Having stated on Groznyy television that the "explosion was aimed at destabilizing the situation in Chechnya and at exacerbating its relations with Azerbaijan," and that it was the work of the Russian special services, Dzhokhar Dudayev reported on several details of the attempt.

According to him, the car's conductor received the explosive device plus timer from two unknown people in Baku as a parcel to be deposited at Mineralnyye Vody station. It is supposed that the timer was set to go off in Gudermes. However, the train was half an hour late, and the tragedy occurred en route. The fatalities were mostly inhabitants of Chechnya as well as one citizen of Azerbaijan.

According to information from CHECHENPRESS sent to IZVESTIYA's editorial office, an unknown person left the package containing the explosives in the car at Prokhladnaya station Kabardino-Balkaria. According to the CHECHENPRESS story, the explosive device went off before the train reached Gudermes station.

The Ministry of Railroads, to which we turned for a commentary, merely repeated information which was already known to us. In the opinion of railroad officials, the Russian Ministry of Security is in possession of all the facts. A highly placed official at the Ministry of Security, pointing to the lack of information, said for his part that: "The political mess which has developed in Russia does not now allow the central special services to conduct any effective operations on Chechnya's territory without its agreeing to this, or to be more precise, without its suggesting this. This is an absurd situation."

Ingush's Aushev To Appeal to Ossetian People for Peace

OW0203144893 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1422 GMT 2 Mar 93

[Report on "exclusive interview" with Ruslan Aushev, president-elect of Ingushetia, by unidentified correspondent on 2 March in Moscow; following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] In an exclusive interview for Interfax this Tuesday [2 March] morning in Moscow, Ingushetia's historically first president-elect Ruslan Aushev said he wants to appeal to the Ossetian people with a call for peace and political settlement of all the problems in the Ossetian-Ingush relations, so they would not be inherited by the future generations. In the meantime, Ingushetia's first president emphasized that he is not giving up his previous demands in regards to the introduction of federal rule in Prigorodnyy District and withdrawal of all troops from Ingushetia.

He also shared his intention to meet with the North Ossetian leaders in Moscow on March 9.

Ruslan Aushev pointed to the need for Ingushetia to address the issue of Prigorodnyy District with North Ossetia on the basis of the Russian parliament's law on rehabilitation of the repressed peoples. This law provides for the land which historically belonged to these people to be returned to them. He observed in that regard that the Ingushes are only claiming to return the portion of the Prigorodnyy District which was part of the Chechen-Ingush Autonomous republic before their deportation in 1994.

Among his first priorities, the Ingush president-elect is referring to the return of 67,000 Ingush refugees and search and liberation of nearly 600 hostages to their historical homeland in Prigorodnyy District in North Ossetia. In the words of the president-elect, some of the hostages have already come back home: 3000 Ingush nationals returned to the village of Kartza, and 600 to Chermen.

Ruslan Aushev also indicated that he had "certain questions" regarding the parliamentary elections in Ingushetia which are slated for April 11. He maintains that the republic should have some other representative body, other than parliament - a Council of the Elders, for instance. "Executive power is highly imperative here," he stressed.

Ruslan Aushev said that Ingushetia will build its relations with Moscow on the federative basis. In order to effect this, Ingushetia is going to sign the federative Agreement.

New President Seen Loyal to Russia

MK0203124493 Moscow NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA in Russian 2 Mar 93 p 1

[Natalya Pachegina article: "Republic Finally Gets Its Own President. This, However, Is Hardly Going To Help Solve Its Problems"]

[Text] No official results are yet available on the 28 February mekh-Da (Ingush word for "presidential") elections in the Ingush republic. According to Makhmud Sakalov, chairman of the republic's central electoral commission, however, it can confidently be said that between 96 and 98 percent of the republic's population (it is asserted that there has been no rigging, as was common practice during similar events in the epoch when the people 'existed within the Union') have voted for their first president—Major General Ruslan Aushev, a career military man and Hero of the Soviet Union. The biography of the sole presidential candidate is as well-known as it is simple: The 38-year-old president was born in the village of Volodarskoye, Kokchetav Oblast, in the Kazakh Soviet Socialist Republic. In 1975 he graduated from the Yeremenko General Troops High Command Academy in Ordzhonikidze; he served in the army, was a member of the limited contingent of Soviet troops on the territory of Afghanistan, and was seriously wounded in combat. In 1985 Aushev graduated from the Frunze Academy. Since March 1991 he has been chairman of the Internationalist Soldiers Committee under the Council of Commonwealth Heads of State. He is married with two children.

The intervention on the part of the Russian Supreme Soviet in moving the presidential elections in Ingushetia, set by the January Congress of the Ingush people, from 24 January to 28 February, cost the republic yet another month of a vacuum in power. Despite the cautiousness of some and suspiciousness of others, the 28 February elections passed off without excesses. Observers visited several election precincts in the Nazranovskiy, Malgobekskiy, and Sunzhenskiy rayons of Ingushetia, where they met with local residents, including Russians. According to the central electoral commission chairman, the highest activity was registered among that part of the population that is diplomatically called "people forced to leave their former places of residence" (the Ingush themselves, however, talk about election precincts for deportees). About 63,500 refugees (figures cited by the Russian Federal Migration Service) in Ingushetia have high hopes that the president's election will help resolve the issue of their return to Prigorodnyy Rayon in the North Ossetian Soviet Socialist Republic.

General Aushev's loyalty to Russia is manifested in his readiness to grant dual citizenship—Russian and Ingushetian—to people permanently residing in the republic, and also in having two state languages—Ingush and Russian.

However, military and civilian officials in the interim administration on the territory of North Ossetia and the Ingush republic believe that the fact that Ingushetia now has a president of its own will hardly help resolve the many political, economic, and social problems that have plagued the republic in the last two years of anarchy or that were inherited from the "Soviet period" of its history. Ingushetia's statehood, officials in the interim administration believe, cannot by itself, with a vacuum of executive and federal authority, guarantee the solution of the issue of disputed territories claimed by the Ingush, just as it is incapable of ensuring that the refugees return to their former homes. A federation treaty with the Ingush republic must oviously cover these issues. At the same time, the sluggishness of the supreme Russian authority will hardly be conducive to a moderate and restrained attitude on the part of the Ingush president, who has already once (in a statement announcing his resignation from the position as head of the interim administration of the Ingush republic in January 1993) demonstrated his emotional and political propensity for independence. In that event we can expect the borders of the Russian Federation to narrow even more; and that, as in all other instances of Russia's relations with the former national provinces, will not earn it either authority or security.

Whatever scenario events in that region may follow, the status of the Ingush republic binds the Russian Government to concrete political moves, taking into account the now rare and therefore precious readiness (despite "certain circumstances" of the Ossetian-Ingush conflict) of the Ingush people to live collectively with the peoples of Russia.

To Take Office 7 Mar

LD0203210193 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1926 GMT 2 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS special correspondent Mikhail Shevtsov]

[Text] Nazran March 2 TASS—In compliance with the decision adopted by the presidium of the Extraordinary Congress of the Peoples of Ingushetia, Ruslan Aushev will assume office of the president of the Republic of Ingushetia at a solemn investiture scheduled to be held on March 7, local television broadcasted this evening. Ruslan Aushev was elected to the post on Sunday [28 February].

Head of Ossetia Administration Interviewed

PM0203131193 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 26 Feb 93 p 2

[Interview with Major General Aleksandr Kotenkov, head of the Provisional Administration on the Territory of North Ossetia and Ingushetia, by Yuriy Rublevskiy, press secretary of the Provisional Administration, and Gennadiy Alekhin of VESTNIK VREMENNOY ADMINISTRATSII; place, date not given: "'We Should Not Have To Start From Scratch Every Time'—Five Questions for Major General Aleksandr Kotenkov, Head of the Provisional Administration on the Territory of North Ossetia and Ingushetia"]

[Text] [KRASNAYA ZVEZDA] Aleksandr Alekseyevich, the North Caucasus Internal Troops District has been formed. Does this mean that the joint forces in the state of emergency zone will soon be entirely replaced by internal troops?

[Kotenkov] I do not think so. The thing is that the formation of the North Caucasus Internal Troops District is a lengthy process. It will take at least six months to complete it. The creation of the district is not connected with the forthcoming repeal of the state of emergency, although the Ossetian-Ingush conflict did serve as a motive of sorts for its formation. This is a long-term measure aimed at stabilizing the situation in the region.

As for the Russian Army, provision for bringing Russian Armed Forces units into the conflict zone is made under the law on the state of emergency. After the formation of the Internal Troops District is completed, army units will still continue to be used if necessary.

[KRASNAYA ZVEZDA] Are the troops here coping with the tasks assigned to them?

[Kotenkov] Undoubtedly. It would be possible to limit myself just to this answer, but I want to say more. I will not give an assessment of the operations of units at the beginning of the conflict, since I simply was not there, but from the moment I arrived, especially in the early period, I have constantly visited the subunits. I have a good idea of the conditions Russian servicemen find themselves in.

There are plenty of difficulties, so to speak. That is a very mild assessment of the situation. But the quality of the service does not suffer from the existing problems. Although, unfortunately, there are excesses. However, on the whole, I think, none of the Provisional Administration staff can make any complaint against the troops.

[KRASNAYA ZVEZDA] But it is well known that among a section of the population and some leaders there is an opinion that servicemen sell weapons. What can you say on this account?

[Kotenkov] I can say one thing with complete confidence: Our soldiers and officers are continually "worked on" by the local population and asked to sell weapons. But all the time I have been here, I know of only one incident, when a deserting soldier sold his personal weapon. Incidentally, he was quickly detained and brought to account. I know of no other incidents involving the sale of weapons.

As for other negative phenomena, they are on the level of rumors, so to speak. Several instances have been recorded of the appearance of military vehicles in deserted Ingush settlements. And someone allegedly saw soldiers taking out and loading household goods. We thoroughly checked this report. Moreover, we recently detained a group suspected of pillaging. However, the operational investigational measures carried out in this case brought no results. I will not deny that individual negative incidents have taken place, but they are not widespread or deliberate.

[KRASNAYA ZVEZDA] But in that case it is logical to ask what goal is pursued by all manner of rumors spread about Russian servicemen.

[Kotenkov] I will not hide the fact that our presence is not to the liking of many people. There are dozens of social and political currents which are indeed hampered by our troops. Sergey Shakhray, while speaking on the causes of the conflict, has repeatedly named mafia structures as one of its motive forces. We saw for ourselves of the justice of these words after the troops, having set about maintaining the state of emergency, began to uncover numerous incidents of criminal activity. These structures have had their access to looted valuables blocked. Of course, they are interested in our troops being withdrawn.

[KRASNAYA ZVEZDA] Aleksandr Alekseyevich, the troops here have acquired albeit difficult, but very rich experience of peacekeeping activity. How best can we use it?

[Kotenkov] You may or may not choose to believe this, but I would not like this experience to be utilized at all. However, you are right, it should not be wasted. There are intentions to address a proposal to the Russian Federation president for peacekeeping forces to operate on a permanent basis, so to speak. Better to spend the resources once, but be in permanent readiness to fulfill a peacekeeping mission—both for civilians, and the military. Then it would not be necessary to start from scratch every time.

People often ask: Aren't we making a mistake investing huge resources in the state of emergency zone, resources which disappear like water in the sands, and keeping the Russian Army and internal troops there? I am convinced that it is worth while now investing several tens of billions of rubles for a complete settlement of the conflict. If the conflagration of such conflicts spreads from here through Russia, it could be an irreparable disaster. And then even hundreds of billions of rubles would not be able to extinguish it.

Tatarstan, Crimea Sign Cooperation Agreement

MK0203145693 Moscow NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA in Russian 2 Mar 93 p 3

[Radik Batyrshin report: "Kazan Gains Access to Warm Seas. And Gets Ready To Open Other 'Windows' on the World"]

[Text] During the visit to Crimea by Tatarstan's government delegation under Deputy Prime Minister Filza Khamidullin that ended on 27 February, an agreement on trade and economic cooperation between the Republic of Tatarstan and the Republic of Crimea was signed for the current year, and a draft long-term agreement on economic and cultural cooperation was drawn up. Tatarstan is to deliver to Crimea diesel fuel, fuel oil, polyethylene, KamAZ vehicles, and other industrial products. Simferopol will offer Kazan fruit, opportunities for Tatars to vacation there, and—most important—its ports. The Crimean authorities agreed to Tatarstan's presence in the future free economic zone in Kerch. Everything will be very simple: Tatar tankers will sail along the Volga river, then enter the Azov Sea via the Volga-Don canal, and finally find their way into the warm-water ports of the Black Sea. The Tatar delegation did not have to fear Kiev's anger over their talks with the Crimean leaders: Before the visit began, Nikolay Bagrov, chairman of the Supreme Soviet of the Republic of Crimea, got the Ukrainian leadership's "go-ahead" to the draft agreement. A special provision of the agreement provides that mutual deliveries by Tatarstan and Crimea are not to be taken into account in relations with third countries. In simpler language this means that the cooperation between Simferopol and Kazan will not affect the overall balance of economic relations between Russia and Ukraine.

Although the Kazan side took great pains to stress the nonpolitical character of the negotiations, the Crimean Tatars issue could not be ignored. Rafail Khakimov, adviser to the Tatar president, met with Rifat Chubarov, deputy chairman of the National Assembly. According to Chubarov, the National Assembly is quite wary of the contacts between Kazan and Simferopol. The Tatarstan presidential adviser hopes, however, that Kazan will be able to find common ground on the Crimean Tatars problem with both the Crimean authorities and the National Assembly. Under the draft long-term agreement, Tatarstan will undertake to provide assistance to the Tatar diaspora in Crimea. Answering a question from NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA as to what diaspora was meant—the Crimean Tatar or the Volga Tatar—Rafail Khakimov said: "Separating the Crimean Tatars from those hailing from the Volga region and living in Crimea is a difficult and unrewarding task." According to Khakimov, "it is essential to take into account specific features of each of those ethnic groups, but we will provide assistance in the cultural development of all the Tatars living in Crimea." Khakimov believes that contradictions in the national movement of the Crimean Tatars force Tatarstan to distance itself from those structures and avoid giving one-sided backing to any of them.

The only fly in the ointment of the visit to Simferopol was the issue of reciprocal accounting. The reason for this is that the agreement will come into effect only after the sides manage to find a way of converting karbovantsy [Ukrainian currency] into rubles and vice versa. But Kazan thinks it is a technical problem that can be resolved. Having gained an access to warm seas, Tatarstan is not going to stop at this—draft agreements with Kazakhstan, Estonia, Latvia, and Turkmenistan have already been drawn up. "It only remains to agree on a time for signing them," Khakimov stressed.

Kuzbass Mines on Strike; Vorkuta Miners Make New Demands

OW0103144093 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1401 GMT 1 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] A warning strike of Russian coal miners has started on Monday [1 March]. As of 3 p.m. Moscow time, 42 coal mines struck work in Kemerovo Region, Interfax was told in the Council of Workers' Committees of Kuzbass. Some mines and quarries have been brought to complete halt while others have stopped shipments. The warning strike is undertaken by the Independent Union of Mineworkers in the region.

The overriding demand of the striking miners is that a new wages agreement for 1993 be made, wages increase as the inflation rate goes up, the government provide social guarantees, and the mechanism of subsidizing the industry be improved.

On Tuesday [as received], Interfax was told, the strike will be halted until March 10. The pre-strike alert will be maintained. This decision was made on the eve of the strike in order to coordinate efforts with the official Independent Union of Mining Industry Workers.

In the Pechora coal field (Komi Republic) 13 mines struck work in Vorkuta. The miners support the Independent Union of Mineworkers's demand and make some of their own. In particular, they want the decree on sales of mines suspended until a governmental program of supporting and closure of loss making pits is introduced and the government to guarantee the payments for compulsory deliveries of coal. They also demand that the wages fund be double that of December.

If these demands are not met the miners intend to begin an indefinite strike on March 10, Interfax was informed by Aleksandr Marmaliukov, the deputy chairman of the Independent Union of Vorkuta Miners. He said that the union would not make any political demands.

The Kapitalnaya mine in the town of Inta (Komi republic) closed down completely Monday, Interfax was informed by the Intaugol concern. Intaugol includes five coal-producing enterprises. Two more mines are divided between strike action and work as usual. The two Vostochnaya and Zapadnaya mines are working as usual.

Workers from the Bashkirugol association have declared their solidarity with the strikers (Bashkortostan produces 2 million tons of briquette coal per year). Interfax was informed, however, by the association's administration that the 8,500 Bashkortostan miners would not join the strike because of long overdue supplies to consumers.

Miners from the Severouralsk boxite mines department from the town of Severouralsk in the Sverdlovsk region are backing the Kuzbass and Vorkuta miners. These mines produce 80% of Russia's boxite. The miners declared in a telegram addressed to parliament, the president and the government Friday that they were reserving their right to political strike action. Aleksandr Yefremov, the president of the Severouralsk Miners' Union, said that strike action at the Severouralsk pits could commence no earlier than March 10.

Sergey Drugov, a member of the Sverdlovsk Regional Committee of Coal Workers' Trade Unions, said that tension remained in the Vakhrushevugol manufacturing association from Karpinsk in the Sverdlovsk region. Miners were not content with pay which was still 15,000 rubles.

Drugov told Interfax, however, that the proposal for a one-day warning strike had received no backing. The committee intended to liaise closely with the Russian Committee for Independent Coal Industry Workers' Trade Unions and would not take any independent action.

Two of the 36 mines on the Rostov region are on strike, Interfax was informed by the region's Independent Coal Workers' Union.

Pechora Basin Miners Resume Work

LD0203171793 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1449 GMT 2 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Viktor Makarov]

[Text] Vorkuta, the Komi Republic, March 2 TASS—All mines and enterprises of the Pechora coal basin in Vorkuta and Inta, who participated in the all-Russian one-day warning miners' strike, resumed work today. However, pre-strike situation preserves at Vorkuta and Inta mining industry enterprises.

Miners are ready to go on strike again if before March 10 the Russian Government does not start solving the mining industry problems and satisfying their demands.

Head of the Republican Workers' Committee Vyacheslav Tukan, who is also head of the Vorkuta City Workers' Committee, told ITAR-TASS miners are determined to achieve the fulfilment of their demands. In his words, they act in correspondence with the law on solution of collective labor disputes (conflicts).

St. Petersburg Mayor Says Referendum in Danger

LD0203230093 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1400 GMT 2 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Lyudmila Fomicheva]

[Text] St. Petersburg, 2 Mar (ITAR-TASS)—"At a moment when there would seem to be stabilization emerging in society, there is again a whipping-up of the situation which could cancel out all the hopes of the Russians for a normal democratic course of the country's development," St. Petersburg Mayor Anatoliy Sobchak said today in a conversation with the ITAR-TASS correspondent. "Enormous misgivings are provoked by the fact that the state criminals who tried to stage a coup in the country in August 1991 not only remain uncondemned, but have been set at liberty and are trying to take an active part in political life to take us back to the past."

Attention is now focused on two main problems. These are the question of the holding of the referendum on 11 April and the confrontation between the president and parliament. Today, Sobchak thinks, one can say that the referendum has, in fact, been sabotaged or is facing a serious danger of not being held at all. Organizational arrangements have not yet taken place, but the main thing is that questions for the referendum have not yet been formulated.

City Short of Cash

OW0203194693 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1904 GMT 2 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The April 11 referendum "will not be held in St. Petersburg for purely technical and financial reasons," said Aleksandr Belyayev, Chairman of the city council at a news conference on Tuesday [2 March]. He said that even an estimate of the referendum costs had not been approved. In his view, this event must be financed by central authorities.

In his words, the recent statement of the Central Electoral Board chairman that everything was set for the referendum amounted to "delusions of a man who is out of touch with what is really going on." He endorsed the view of Mayor Anatoliy Sobchak that today "it would be premature to try to make a definitive decision on the form of state power in Russia."

Saratov Inhabitants Divided Over Referendum Participation

PM0203144193 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 27 Feb 93 First Edition p 2

[Oleg Zlobin report: "If You Do Not Repair the Water Mains, We Will Not Go to Vote"]

[Text] Saratov Oblast has gotten used to referendums. After all, apart from the unforgettable Union referendum, a series of so-called public opinion polls have also been held in several rayons and in the city of Engels. The inhabitants of the backwater of the Volga area were instructed to state their position on the German autonomous formation. And now the word "referendum" is again featuring in the Volga area inhabitants' vocabulary. Addressing heads of administration of Saratov Oblast rayons and cities, Governor Yuriy Belykh expressed himself unequivocally: Whether the plebiscite takes place or not, no one has repealed the Congress' decision as yet, and preparations for the referendum must be made, although there are undoubtedly more pressing tasks.

A commission for preparations for the plebiscite has been formed in the oblast administration. Such a commission is already in operation in the Oblast Soviet of People's Deputies. Vladimir Kholin, its chairman, believes that the creation of a parallel commission in the administration is an illegal measure pursuing "strictly political aims."

Well, the open confrontation between the authorities only inspires feelings of depression and resentment in the hearts of the ordinary inhabitants of Saratov. Although the sharp old men in the backwater are making their own use of the advantages of the moment—they have heaped ultimatums on the local authorities: "If you do not repair the water mains, we will not go to your referendum."

The Saratov Oblast Soviet Department for the Study of Public Opinion recently carried out a sociological poll at the largest enterprises in the oblast center. It turned out that only one-third of those polled, who included workers from the bearing and aviation plants, as well as specialists from one of the scientific research institutes, support the idea of holding a Russian nationwide referendum. This idea has just as many opponents. A significant proportion of the city's inhabitants are completely indifferent to these problems.

Despite the unpopularity of the idea of holding a nationwide Russian referendum on the basic provisions of the new Constitution, 44.6 percent of those polled intend to personally participate in the ballot, while 33 percent do not wish to go to vote. A total of 17 percent have not yet decided, while 5.3 percent are decidedly uninterested in this question.

Those Saratov inhabitants who expressed support for the idea of holding a referendum are hoping that it will give the people an opportunity to display their will and that it will help overcome the confrontation between the president and the Supreme Soviet.

International Affairs

Official Says Russia 'Blocking' START I Ratification

LD0303113293 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 1000 GMT 3 Mar 93

[Text] According to Ukrainian Vice Premier Tarasyuk, Russia is blocking Kiev's ratification of the START I nuclear disarmament treaty by refusing to give Ukraine sufficient guarantees of security. Yesterday Tarasyuk told AFP that Ukraine wanted to ease world tension by ratifying START I, but should not forget about guarantees of her national interests.

Further Denial of Nuclear Warhead Sale to Palestinians

LD0303111093 Moscow Radio Moscow World Service in English 1910 GMT 2 Mar 93

[Text] The Ukrainian embassy's press service in Moscow has described as a crude fraud, allegations by the Palestinian newspaper AL-QUDS to the effect that Ukraine has sold two nuclear warheads to the Palestine resistance. The newspaper says that Ukrainian officers were also instructing Palestinians in the combat use of nuclear warheads.

An adviser of the Ukrainian embassy in Moscow, Vadym Dolganov, came to Radio Moscow's studios to say the following:

[Dolganov in Russian fading to English report] We have dismissed this as a crude fraud, the Ukrainian diplomat says. The aims were clear—to make the world think that Ukraine defies international agreements and its nuclear arms non-proliferation commitments. The allegations have appeared in the press at a time when the Ukrainian parliament is discussing the first Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty, START I. It is very clear to us what forces may need this falsehood, what they may need it for and how it was cooked up. All this is very reminiscent of the anti-Ukrainian campaign following allegations about Ukraine's oil supplies to Serbia in by-pass of the United Nations sanctions. That blunder first appeared in a provincial Romanian newspaper and only after that it was repeated by all other mass media. Ukraine had to dismiss the rumors and United Nations enquiries into the affair to find out that Ukraine was not to blame.

Now there is another so-called hot story and it appears in a minor Palestinian newspaper AL-QUDS registered in Moscow. We have been able to find out that it is published by a Palestinian called (Shaban). However, the editor's phones are the same as those of the SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA newspaper. Both newspapers use the same printing facilities. Apparently AL-QUDS is a daughter publication of SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA, which is notorious for its negative attitude to independent Ukraine. Many publications in SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA are evidence of that. Their authors say they are patriots of Russia, but at the same time they have been trying to drive a wedge between Ukraine and the Russian Federation and make the people of Russia doubt the sincerity of Ukraine's aspirations and actions.

As far as the nuclear warheads are concerned, they are controlled not by Ukraine alone but by the Allied Command of the Commonwealth, too. Any movement is protected by satellites. Contrary to the story in AL-QUDS it would be just impossible to transport warheads in a briefcase via Cyprus. That tale was told for laymen who are unfamiliar with the subtleties of political intrigue, unlike the authors of such disinformations.

[Announcer] An interview with the adviser of the Ukrainian embassy in Moscow, Vadym Dolganov.

Official Disagrees With Russia's 'Special' Peacekeeping Role

OW0203175793 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1640 GMT 2 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Ukraine understands Russia's concern with the continuous hostilities in the former USSR and is prepared to help it and other countries to restore peace, said Ukraine's Deputy Foreign Minister at a news conference in Kiev.

On the other hand, Ukraine will never agree that a single CIS member nation, for instance Russia, take up full responsibility for keeping the peace in the CIS.

Commenting on the remark on a special role to be played by Russia in maintaining peace within the former USSR that President Boris Yeltsin of Russia made at the Civic Union convention in Moscow on February 28, Tarasyuk emphasized that Kiev would never consent to "any country installing law and order within our territory." Tarasyuk described Russia's attempts to win support of the UN in obtaining "special peace keeping rights" within the CIS as "astonishing."

Plyushch Evaluates Black Sea Organization's Work

LD0303110093 Kiev Radio Ukraine World Service in Ukrainian 0600 GMT 3 Mar 93

[Text] Ivan Plyushch called the meeting of representatives of Albania, Azerbaijan, Armenia, Georgia, Moldova, Romania, Russia, Turkey, and Ukraine who took part in a session of parliamentary leaders and delegations of the Black Sea basin countries in Istanbul very important and productive. He stated to journalists, after the delegation's return to the fatherland, that we had signed a declaration on creating a parliamentary assembly of member countries of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation organization.

This document underlines the devotion of the region's countries to the principles of democracy, free economy, and social justice. The speaker of the Ukrainian parliament drew journalists' attention to such a nuance. Among the nine countries whose representatives signed the declaration, six are former republics of the USSR.

However, stressed Ivan Plyushch, work went on in a very organized manner. He said that they left without any reservations, because they succeeded in defining the mechanism for economic cooperation.

Participants of the meeting also worked out the regulation of the parliamentary assembly. It is expected that it will be adopted at its first session. It should also take place in Istanbul in the second half of June. Ivan Plyushch noted that the president, parliament, and the government of Turkey contributed much to the success of the work.

Kravchuk Interviewed on Role in Post Cold War World

AU0203162393 Budapest MAGYAR NEMZET in Hungarian 26 Feb 93 p 7

[Interview with President Leonid Kravchuk by MAGYAR NEMZET Deputy Chief Editor Jozsef Martin and Moscow correspondent Laszlo Vida, in Kiev; date not given: "Ukraine Wants To Settle Its Differences of Views With Russia Peacefully"]

[Excerpts] [passage omitted] [MAGYAR NEMZET] After more than three centuries, Ukraine regained its independence in December 1991. Mr. President, how do you see your country's situation and role in the post-cold war world?

[Kravchuk] Ukraine declared its independence as a democratic constitutional state striving for openness. We committed ourselves to a market economy, and we are building a bourgeois society that guarantees equality to all the nations living in Ukraine. Any other approach would be a mistake. As for our immediate neighbors, our relations with Russia and Belarus have priority, but I must add immediately that this is not so only because of our Slavic origin; we are starting from realities, namely that most of our historical traditions and most economic, political, cultural, and humanitarian ties link us with these two nations. The European neighbors and the countries with a considerable Ukrainian diaspora represent the other priority of our foreign policy. Naturally, Hungary is also among our major partners because we are immediate neighbors. Of course, this also presents certain problems, all the more so because there are some 165,000 ethnic Hungarians living in Ukraine. Given the fact that Ukraine is in the center of Europe, we cannot only look toward the East, but we must also pay attention to Europe. European integration, primarily economic integration but also possible cooperation in other fields, is vital for us, and we are trying to express this through our measures. I would like to stress that Ukraine is a peace-loving state; we have repeatedly declared our determination to make Ukraine a country free of nuclear weapons in the future, to join the nuclear ban agreement, and to actively participate in the reduction of conventional troops in Europe.

[MAGYAR NEMZET] The Russian-Ukrainian relations are one of the major elements of security and stability in Europe. Unfortunately, to the considerable dismay of the outside world, tensions are dominating these relations at present. Take the problem of Soviet debts, the debate on the Russian oil and gas supplies, and the issue of the affiliation of Crimea.

[Kravchuk] I understand the concern both abroad and here about the controversies between two powers with such military potential and considerable role in European and international politics. However, let us find the roots of these differences of views: We have lived in a common household until now, and the time of sharing has now come. In case of a divorce, a family is also confronted with property and other problems. The same happens in our case, and there is nothing special in this. We are witnessing a natural process of dividing up spheres of interest, the common property, the Army, the Fleet, and everything else. On the other hand, there are forces both in Russia and the Ukraine that would like to make use of any of the aforementioned trivial issues to present it as a conflict. However, one thing cannot be trivial for me: The debate on Crimea and Sevastopol affects our territorial integrity, and therefore, I regard it as a special problem, and the very mentioning of this issue or any attempt to make it a subject of bargaining lack any justification. There is no need whatsoever to reexamine this issue because this could only lead to a deterioration of the situation. Although some forces have different ideas, we are in favor of driving our debates with Russia toward a peaceful dialogue.

[MAGYAR NEMZET] Are you alarmed by the fact that the "Ukrainian card" is played precisely by the nationalist opposition in Moscow about whom many people have already forecast that it will soon get rid of Yeltsin?

[Kravchuk] Of course I am alarmed by this. However, you will probably understand that the whole of Europe has reasons to feel alarmed because, although Ukraine would be the first to feel the pressure and the change in course, it would hardly be the only country to feel the effects of such a change. According to their declarations, these forces have a much bigger appetite. Most people are still speculating on whom to support. Although every nation decides alone on whom to elect, events could take a sudden dangerous turn by means of dictatorship and violence. [passage omitted]

[MAGYAR NEMZET] What do you hope for from the CIS? What is your opinion about its future? Will Ukraine remain a CIS member at all?

[Kravchuk] The structure of the CIS made it possible to settle numerous questions. However, it still would not be realistic to think that the CIS could replace bilateral relations or the broader relations with Europe and the world at large, just like the division of labor within the

CIS could not replace international economic cooperation, either. This has not yet succeeded because there are member states that are in favor of returning to a closer union, one almost based on the principles of the former union. However, I am in favor of continuing the current structure of the CIS.

[MAGYAR NEMZET] After the United States and Russia, Ukraine is the third nuclear power at the moment. Kiev has already declared its intention to get rid of the nuclear weapons. However, the ratification of the START I agreement is delayed. How do you explain this?

[Kravchuk] This is the task of the Parliament. I submitted START I and the nuclear ban agreement to Parliament more than two months ago. The documents are being studied now. We are conducting broad consultations with countries that could provide financial and organizational assistance. I think the ratification will take place; the only question is when. I do not think that the Supreme Council is dragging its feet deliberately.

[MAGYAR NEMZET] When do you think Ukraine will ratify the agreement?

[Kravchuk] The issue is on the agenda of the current session of the Supreme Council.

[MAGYAR NEMZET] Doubts have been expressed about the technical servicing and safety of the nuclear weapons deployed in Ukraine. Do we have reasons to be alarmed?

[Kravchuk] During my latest talks in Moscow, we agreed that Russia would provide assistance in servicing the missiles deployed here. We must come to an agreement with the Russians because they brought these weapons systems here. However, ratification is the most important thing now, and a lot of questions will arise after this ratification. The elimination of such a number of missiles hardly costs less than their construction, and all this under circumstances of serious economic crisis, when we should increase our social expenses. [passage omitted]

[MAGYAR NEMZET] How do you envisage the settling of the Yugoslav crisis? What is the difference between Kiev's position and Moscow's position?

[Kravchuk] We are stressing the importance of restoring peace, and we do not want to pick up any of the sides as guilty or not, and we do not accuse some and support others. Ukraine is ready to contribute to settling the crisis in the framework of the United Nations, the CSCE, or other international structures whose status makes them adequate for this mission. As is well known, a Ukrainian battalion is also participating in the peacekeeping forces. Our task is to put an end to the bloodshed and to see to it that peace and calm prevail again in the Balkans. We oppose any kind of unilateral action.

[MAGYAR NEMZET] What is your opinion about the chances of unification between Moldova and Romania?

[Kravchuk] This is the affair of the Moldovan people. I visited there recently and, as far as I understood the words of my hosts, there are not too many followers of the idea of reunification. There are forces that keep this issue alive, but according to the president, it would be a mistake to think that the population would vote in favor of reunification.

[MAGYAR NEMZET] Ukraine cannot be indifferent to this issue, because Romania already has territorial demands from you.

[Kravchuk] I officially told President Mircea Snegur that we would like the Dniester region to receive a status that would see to it that no one could force the opposite if the population refused the idea of reunification in a possible referendum. In other words, the rights for self-determination of the people living in this area, mostly Ukrainians and Russians, must be respected. However, this does not mean that we would demand the unification of the Dniester region with Ukraine. We are starting from the premise that the existing borders are sacred. A nation should have the right to decide on how to live and with whom to live, but international agreements should also guarantee that they are not forced to take any steps contrary to their declared intentions under any circumstances. [passage omitted]

[MAGYAR NEMZET] We have all the reasons to hope that the Hungaran-Ukrainian good-neighborly relations will be based on identical treatment of the minorities issue. What can the Hungarians in Subcarpathia expect from your upcoming visit in Budapest?

[Kravchuk] The same thing as the others who live in Ukraine, namely the strengthening of good neighborly relations. I would not like my visit in Budapest to only interest the Hungarians in Ukraine. In this case, there would be no sense in making such a visit. The entire people of Hungary and Ukraine should be interested in this visit. It is another matter that we must create conditions for the Hungarians living in the Ukraine in which their rights are not limited in any way whatsoever, either their financial and spiritual or language and religious rights. Full equality, total freedom, and the defense of every personality—this is our position. However, I would not restrict this to the Hungarians only. Everyone, including Hungarians, Ukrainians, and Russians are citizens of Ukraine. Being proud of this will be the greatest asset. [passage omitted]

National Affairs

'Sharp Disagreements' Halt 2 Mar Parliament Session

OW0203152293 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1423 GMT 2 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Ukraine's parliament, which resumed its plenary sessions on Tuesday [2 March], was forced to interrupt its work due to sharp disagreements on the agenda between parliamentary factions.

After chairman of the parliament Ivan Plyushch put forward an extraordinary issue about the election of Constitutional Court members, the Narodnaya Rada faction declared its refusal to participate in the session. In protest, 25 members of the factions handed the parliament's chairman envelopes with their month's deputy salaries.

Parliament is in recess. The session is expected to resume at 17:00 Moscow time.

Until now the session called only one candidate - the chairman of Ukraine's Constitutional court Leonid Yuzkov elected last year. For the last half of the year the parliament started elections of the court two times but the results of the elections always appeared invalid due to the position of Narodnaya Rada, which refused to vote as it disagreed with the candidacies proposed by the president and the speaker.

Plyushch's Actions Protested

LD0203163493 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1422 GMT 2 Mar 93

[By UKRINFORM correspondent Aleksandr Litvinov for TASS]

[Text] Kiev March 2 TASS—The morning plenary session of the Ukrainian parliament was not held, despite the fact that Speaker Ivan Plyushch declared it open. Legislators forming the Narodnaya Rada Party blocked the central rostrum, protesting actions by the speaker who (in their opinion) violated the Ukrainian Constitution.

Without discussing the agenda, Plyushch had given the floor to the chairman of the Counting Commission for the election of the republican Constitutional Court. He substantiated his decision by the need to end the debate on this issue, which began at the previous session.

Narodnaya Rada group members protested, since the issue was not on the agenda.

Passions flew to such an extent that some lawmakers representing the minority, put their pay envelopes (they received their salaries on Tuesday) on the speaker's table.

They did so after the speaker's remark that deputies wanted to receive salaries but did not want to register and work.

The debate ended after the speaker announced an interval in the session till the evening.

Kravchuk Report Postponed

LD0203213793 Kiev Ukrayinske Telebachennya Network in Ukrainian 1700 GMT 2 Mar 93

[Excerpts] Plenary meetings resumed at the Ukrainian Supreme Council session in Kiev today and together with them so did the acute political opposition, without which it is now difficult to imagine our parliament.

[Unidentified correspondent] If the Supreme Council had discussed issues in that order, which the approximate agenda envisages, then the draft law on the legal protection of types of plants would have been the first to be examined. [passage omitted]

At the evening plenary meeting, which proceeded in a calm atmostphere, it was decided to postpone the issue of the Constitutional Court until another time. The deputies agreed in the main on the proposed approximate agenda for the examination of issues at plenary meetings from 2-5 March, apart from the report of the president of Ukraine, which was planned for tomorrow. Leonid Kravchuk will deliver his report later when the budget and the indicative plan for the current year have been determined. The deputies after all went over to examining the draft law on the legal protection of types of plants, already mentioned at the beginning of this account, in its first reading towards the end of the meeting.

Labor Gathering Calls For Urgent Economic Measures

LD2402210593 Kiev Ukrayinske Telebachennya Network in Ukrainian 1900 GMT 24 Feb 93

[Excerpt] An assembly of representatives from labor collectives of the Crimean peninsula, convened by the Council of the Federation of Independent Trade Unions of the Crimea, has taken place in Simferopol.

[Correspondent] Those present examined with emotion the issue of the socio-political situation which has arisen in the Republic of Crimea following the liberalization of prices, a consequence of which is a further fall in the standard of living. Speakers at the assembly said that one of the main reasons for economic ills is the breaking of links with countries of the CIS.

Truly, the volume of industrial production in the Crimea has decreased by nearly 20 percent over the past year. The production of meat has fallen by a quarter, and the production of milk by 15 percent. All this is against a background of high rates of inflation, which has thrown a considerable part of the population beyond the boundary of poverty.

The speakers appealed to the president and the parliaments and governments of Ukraine and the Crimea with demands to adopt urgent measures in order to stabilize the economic situation, and noted that they are not making sufficient use of their rights following the delimitation of their authorities. [passage omitted]

Belarus

Minsk Reduces Conventional Armaments

OW0303142093 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1358 GMT 3 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] In accordance with the decisions of the Belarusian government and parliament on the reduction of armed forces, on Wednesday [3 March] the last train with military equipment assigned to the 76th tank division left the town of Brest. Consequently, the division ceased to exist as a combat unit.

Deputy division commander Gennadiy Gonchar reported that military equipment will be cut at one of the Belarusian tank repair factories. According to the obligations, the republic should remove and destroy about 1,500 tanks.

Conditions for Signing CIS Security Agreement Noted

OW0203163093 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1555 GMT 2 Mar 93

[Report by Andrey Pershin, Andrey Petrovskiy, Vladimir Shishlin, and Boris Grishchenko; from the "Presidential Bulletin" feature; following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Chairman of Nationality Policy Commission at the Belarus Supreme Soviet, chief counsellor to the head of parliament on defense issues, Mechislav Grib, concedes there is a possibility that Belarus may join one of the "defensive alliances."

In an exclusive interview for INTERFAX [IF], Mr Grib had to admit, however, that in contrast to the republic's previous Supreme Soviet, which consisted predominantly of the proponents of "classical neutrality," a considerable share of its incumbent members deem it possible that Belarus may join one of the defensive alliances in capacity of an associated member.

IF Note: Belarus abstained from signing the CIS Collective Security Agreement on the grounds that its legislation is barring its participation in any military or political alliances with other countries. The August 1991 Declaration of Belarus' State Sovereignty, which later on acquired the status of a constitutional edict, defines the republic's policy as aimed at attaining the stature of a neutral, nuclear-free state.

In the opinion of the head of the Nationality Policy Commission, this option could only be adopted under the following three conditions: first, Belarus will be obliged not to station its troops on the territory of any foreign countries; second, Belarusian army will not be taking part in any combat operation beyond its borders; third, Belarus' arms and military equipment will never be used in any armed conflicts between the other parties.

Mr Grib says that Belarus may join the CIS Collective Security Agreement, given the above conditions were observed, reasoning that its membership in the Agreement would reflect positively on Belarus' training its military personnel, as well as on supply of spare parts for its combat materiel.

IF Note: The draft agenda for the coming session of Belarus Supreme Soviet does not include an item on the republic's stance with respect to the CIS Collective Security Agreement. According to the existing parliamentary procedures, however, this item will be included in the agenda of the session if at least 20 members of the Supreme Soviet sign a petition in this regard.

In answering a question in regards to Belarus' plans to sell its arms and other military gear, Mechislav Grib said: "We have sold and will continue selling arms, for we regard it as our unalienable right, whether we are seeking sovereignty or not."

In Mr Grib's words, arms sales issues are the prerogative of the republic's government, indicating that Belarus is now preparing to sell a batch of armored vehicles, as quoted for Belarus by Vienna and Lisbon protocols. As regards supplies of Belarusian tanks to Italy, Mr Grib said an agreement on their sales had been signed before the above documents were concluded, therefore, the buyer only acquired from Belarus the gear which the republic inherited from the former Soviet Union as a surplus.

Asked by INTERFAX correspondent to comment on Belarus' initiating the production of small arms on its territory, Mr Grib opined that it is "better to produce small arms on our own than purchase them in some other country." He added that Belarus is purchasing arms from Russia either for rubles or as barter transactions.

Shushkevich Assigns Priority to Nuclear Energy, Agriculture

OW0303121793 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1141 GMT 3 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Among the most important economic issues on the agenda in Belarus, said Belarus parliament chairman Stanislav Shushkevich, two items "carry the highest priority: the development of nuclear energy and the review of agricultural policies." Speaking at a Tuesday [2 March] meeting in Minsk with senior citizens, he said that "following the Chernobyl disaster, Belarus residents find it difficult to accept the construction of a nuclear power plant, but we don't have an alternative." The Belarus economy does not have a future unless it develops a nuclear energy sector, said Shushkevich.

"I am not opposed to keeping republican livestock at its current level and I do not favor dissolving collective and state farms, but we have to alter our approach to the development of the agricultural sector," said he.

He said it was "not right" for Belarus to pay hard currency for feed grain while the meat the purchases of food grain go to produce sells at prices that are far lower than the price of the feed grain - and it sells for rubles, not hard currency, too.

Romanian Foreign Minister Invites Shushkevich to Bucharest

AU0203191293 Bucharest ROMPRES in English 1423 GMT 3 Mar 93

[Text] Minsk ROMPRES, 2/3/1993—The main moment on the Tuesday, March 2, agenda of the visit to Belarus of Romanian Foreign Minister Teodor Malescanu was the reception at president of the Belarus Supreme Soviet Stanislav Shushkevich.

Minister Malescanu handed a message from Romanian President Ion Iliescu together with the invitation to visit Romania. On the latter occasion the two presidents will sign the friendship and cooperation treaty signed by the two foreign ministers yesterday in Minsk.

Minister Malescanu also met with Vice Premier Sergey Ling, chairman of the State Planning Committee.

U.S. To Grant Further Agricultural Assistance

WS0303145793 Minsk Radio Minsk Network in Belarusian 1300 GMT 3 Mar 93

[Text] We have already informed you about the Foodstuffs for Progress treaty signed between the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the Republic of Belarus. The treaty envisions the shipment to Belarus this year of 200,000 tonnes of corn for fodder worth $19 million. Today we learned that the U.S. Department of Agriculture is expected to sign a new treaty on the shipment of 23,000 tonnes of soya flour worth $5 million on 4 March. The U.S. Embassy press release emphasizes that the treaties are part of the U.S. Government's initiative elaborated to assist Belarus in the implementation of economic reforms, especially to assist Belarusian agriculture. Members of the Belarusian Government and representatives of various organizations have actively cooperated with the U.S. Embassy and have done much to support its humanitarian initiatives. Although official relations between the United States and Belarus were established only a year ago, it seems that our countries may gain from relations based on trust and cooperation.

Alcohol, Food Prices Raised Despite Promises of Stability

WS0203112593 Minsk BELINFORM in Russian 1519 GMT 26 Feb 93

[Text] The government violated the promised price stability for the first quarter of the current year in late February. It primarily increased prices for vodka and spirits, followed by soaring prices for foodstuffs. As the Price Department at the Belarusian State Planning Committee has informed, beginning 1 March retail prices for pork and butter will rise by 1.7 and 1.6 times respectively. Ten days later, Belarusians will pay 1.3 times more for beef and twice more for meat products, including sausages.

From the first spring day the inhabitants will pay more for housing and communal services. Quotients used to calculate tarrrif increase ceilings have been established for them. They are 3 for water supply, sewerage, and electricity and 4.5 for heating and hot water. Time will show how long the new prices can be "bridled". One thing is clear, that store counters that were completely emptied during the period of confusion will soon delight us with their abundance of goods, but for "biting" prices.

National Press Center Created

WS0303113193 Minsk Radio Minsk Network in Belarusian 0605 GMT 3 Mar 93

[Report from the "At the Council of Ministers" program]

[Text] The National Press Center of the Republic of Belarus has been created. It will hold regular meetings of Belarusian and foreign reporters with the leadership and officials of the Supreme Soviet and the government on domestic and foreign policy issues, and prepare official news conferences and briefings. The National Press Center is also planning to publish official press releases and bulletins and foreign language informational materials, including the illustrated magazine BELARUS TODAY. Along with the Belarusian Reporters Union, it will organize the work of the press club of Belarusian and foreign journalists. The National Center will be located in Minsk at Kastryshnitskaya, 5.

Moldova

Parliament Begins Draft Constitution Discussion 2 Mar

OW0103200093 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1910 GMT 1 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The Moldovan parliament is to start discussing a draft constitution of the republic on March 2. It will be presented to the deputies by Chairman of the Constitutional Commission, President Mircea Snegur.

Along the preservation of the presidency the document envisages the creation of new power institutions - the Constitutional Court and the professional parliament. According to the draft, the Supreme Council will number 95 members (the present parliament includes 360) and will be called Sfatul Tserii (the Council of the Country) like the electoral body of the Moldavian Democratic Republic of 1918.

After adopting the draft Constitution in the first reading and discussing it publicly the deputies will have to take a decision on the implementation of the referendum to confirm the consitution as a whole or its main articles.

Snegur Presents New Draft

LD0203193093 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1310 GMT 2 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Valeriy Demidetskiy]

[Text] Chisinau, 2 Mar—President Mircea Snegur today presented to the Moldovan parliament a draft of the republic's new constitution. Its adoption, he stressed, will enable the republic to transfer more quickly from de jure independence to real independence.

As chairman of the Constitutional Commission, Mircea Snegur acquainted deputies with the basic principles which guided those who elaborated the draft. The first of these is a declaration on Moldova's independence. In the new constitution particular attention is focused on preserving the principle of the permanent neutrality of the state. The president noted that Moldova's state structure can be neither capitalist nor socialist—it must be constitutional. The bearer of sovereignty and the only source of state power are the people who, directly and through their representative bodies, carry out the administration of the republic. Usurpation of power is regarded in the draft as a very serious crime.

Political and ideological pluralism and the division of powers—legislative, executive, and legal—are a condition and a guarantee of constitutional democracy in Moldova. The draft guarantees equality of private and public ownership. Freedom of the press is also a basic principle of the constitution. Mircea Snegur stressed that those who elaborated the constitution have endeavored to guarantee the rights of ethnic minorities in Moldova and their active participation in the life of the republic.

The constitution provides for a substantial reduction in the corps of deputies and the creation of a professional parliament in which deputies will not occupy state posts at the same time. Executive power will be represented by the president and the government, and it is also proposed to create a constitutional court.

Mircea Snegur expressed the desire that once the draft constitution has been discussed at a first reading it be tabled for nationwide discussion.

Further on Draft Constitution

OW0203163993 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1556 GMT 2 Mar 93

[Report by Andrey Pershin, Andrey Petrovskiy, Vladimir Shishlin, and Boris Grishchenko; from the "Presidential Bulletin" feature; following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] President Mircea Snegur, in his capacity of Chairman of the Constitutional Commission, presented the draft of the new Constitution of Moldova to parliamentary deputies on Tuesday [2 March]. The adoption of the Fundamental Law, he said, should be a concrete step towards confirming Moldova's independence and sovereignty which, he said, had been "so far proclaimed de-jure, but not de-facto." The president was of the view that "republics which had for decades been part of the USSR had only played with the idea of statehood: they had the attributes of statehood, but were, in fact, provinces of an empire."

The commission had, Snegur said, in drafting the Constitution, been guided by a key phrase of the Declaration of Moldovan Independence of August 27, 1991: "The Republic of Moldova is a sovereign, independent and democratic state which determines its future of its own will without external intervention in accordance with the inviolate concept of the nation in the historical and ethnic background of its national evolution."

Snegur said that the document was based on the following principles: 1. The organization of the state must be neither socialist nor capitalist. It must be constitutional. The Constitution of a democratic state must not determine the political system of that state. It must only facilitate normal political and parliamentary activity.

2. The people itself is the bearer of sovereignty and the only source of state power in the republic. The people does directly and through its own representative bodies effect the administration of the state within the limits of the recognized Constitution. No social group, political party or other public movement may represent state power in the name of the people. The usurpation of state power is a serious offence against the people.

3. Political and ideological pluralism is the condition and guarantee of constitutional democracy.

4. Moldova, as a democratic sovereign state, is based on the division of power into legislative, executive and judicial.

5. According to the Constitution the state guarantees freedom of activity to economic agents and protects the interests of the people in economic activity.

6. The freedom of the individual must be the keystone in the division of political rights and civil liberties. The Constitution of Moldova will fully reflect this division in accordance with universally accepted international agreements.

The president stressed that the legal experts who had worked on the Constitution had made every effort to guarantee the rights of national minorities and their right to participate in the social and political life of the country of which they were citizens.

The draft Constitution provides for the creation of new institutions of power—the Constitutional Court and a professional parliament—as well as the existing institution of president. According to the draft the Supreme Council (i.e. Parliament) will consist of 95 people (the current parliament has 60 members). Henceforth parliament will be called the National Council as it was in the Moldovan Democratic Republic of 1918. Executive power will be represented by the president and government.

Snegur also emphasized that the draft Constitution would also maintain the principle of permanent state neutrality.

The president said that the draft Constitution should be submitted for nationwide debate after it has been debated by parliament.

IF [INTERFAX] Note: The co-chairman of the Moldovan Social Democratic Party told a Chisinau press conference Monday that parliamentary deputies could cause "untold harm to the republic by adopting a new constitution which would only escalate today's problems." "Moldova is now at a crossroads," he said, "and no constitution will be capable of bringing it out of crisis."

Commission Agrees on Settlement Provisions for Dniester

LD0303105293 Moscow Mayak Radio Network in Russian 1000 GMT 3 Mar 93

[Text] The main provisions for the settlement of the conflict in the Dniester region have been agreed by a mixed Tiraspol-Chisinau parliamentary commission. So it seems that the situation has finally started moving toward compromise. The document, expected to be signed in Bendery on 4 March, emphasizes that the Dniester region will be granted broad autonomy.

Nikolae Kirtoake, adviser to the Moldovan president on military affairs, has told journalists that the document provides for Tiraspol authorities to have wide powers and extensive freedom of action in the economic sphere.

Moscow, Chisinau Agree To Remove Mines From Dniester

OW0203182893 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1641 GMT 2 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Russia and Moldova reached agreement to remove mines from parts of the Trans-Dniester Region. Agreement was also reached on the provisional status of the Russian airforce deployed in Moldova and the use of the Tiraspol airport by Russian military transport aircraft, the Russian Foreign Ministry said in a statement in Moscow on Tuesday [2 March].

Agreement was reached after the latest round of official talks in Moscow on February 25-26 as part of preparations of a full scale bilateral agreement on the status, procedure and timetable of Russian troop withdrawals from Moldova.

Prospect of Political Settlement With Regions Viewed

MK0203121893 Moscow NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA in Russian 2 Mar 93 p 3

[Aleksandr Tago report: "The Tiraspol-Komrat Separatist Pairing: Reality and Prospects. There Is a Chance To Make It Up With Chisinau]

[Text] Moldova's parliament deems it necessary to "expedite the revision and adoption of a legal status for population centers in the Dniester region and the areas with large Gagauz populations."

The problem of the Gagauz and the Dniester region has been an extremely acute issue confronting Moldova's parliament for two years now. The lawmakers have realized that no sociopolitical stability is possible in the republic unless these issues are resolved. The parliament presidium led by former speaker Alexandru Mosanu, however, delayed the discussion of bills on the legal status of the Dniester region and Gagauzia by every possible means. The situation has changed now that a new speaker, Petru Lucinschi, has taken over parliamentary leadership. Parliament has decided to examine these bills as a priority. To most politicians it is absolutely plain that, if Moldova is to retain its independence, the Dniester region, in whatever shape, will remain part of it, and the Russian Federation's 14th Army deployed there will have to leave the left bank of the Dniester. The current talks between the governments of Moldova and Russia are trying to define the Army's status there and a timetable for its withdrawal from Moldovan territory.

Representatives of international organizations are of a similar opinion. They insist that the Gagauz and Dniester region issues should be resolved on the basis of Moldova's territorial integrity and independence.

In this connection a forecast that looks increasingly realistic is that Russia will have to alter its attitude toward the Dniester region and Gagauz leaders. Realizing this, Komrat is displaying a growing interest in Tiraspol and coordinating with it on policy with respect to Moldova.

Tiraspol leaders are also gambling on an alliance with the Gagauz people, reasoning that by acting together they will be able to change Moldova's state system faster and to create a federation made up, in addition to Moldova, of the Dniester region and Gagauzia. Moscow, most probably, will agree to the replacement of Tiraspol's more zealous leaders in order to honor its official understandings with Chisinau, assuming that Boris Yeltsin sticks to his present positions. Political experts think that Russian pressure on Tiraspol leaders will grow, and Tiraspol will be denied economic and financial support in order to make it see that a solution to the conflict must be looked for in a dialogue with Moldovan politicians.

If events do take this turn, it will appreciably strengthen the hand of Moldovan President Mircea Snegur and parliamentary Speaker Petru Lucinschi. The latter, incidentally, has stated his firm resolve to achieve a warming of relations with Tiraspol and Komrat.

The boost to Snegur's and Lucinschi's political prestige will hit at the opposition represented by the Christian-Democratic Popular Front. The Popular Front's gamble on Moldova's unification with Romania will appear less topical, while the Popular Front will start losing support.

Apparently realizing this, the Front has called on political and public organizations of "national and democratic orientation" to form a broad coalition. According to Yuriy Roshka, chairman of the Popular Front Executive Committee, the all-important task at present is to "strengthen and consolidate the Christian Democratic Popular Front structures."

The Front leaders think that only if these are consolidated will they be able to hold out in the "coming tough political confrontation."

The Dniester opposition leaders' gamble on Grigoriy Marakutsu, chairman of the Dniester Moldovan Republic Supreme Soviet, however, has yet to be vindicated. He is still part of the radical Igor Smirnov's team.

A total replacement of the Dniester Moldovan Republic leadership looks quite realistic in this situation. This would make it much easier for the president and the speaker of the Moldovan parliament to resolve the Dniester region conflict.

The completion of Snegur and Lucinschi's dialogue with Tiraspol also offers a good chance to resolve the Gagauz question. Having lost support in the Dniester region, the Gagauz leaders will become more tractable, and they will obviously not be pressing for a federative system for Moldova. It is absolutely obvious that Moldova's social and political stability over the short and the longer terms will depend in the most direct manner on the legal status that the Moldovan parliament grants to the Dniester region and Gagauzia. On the other hand, this will depend on the new Constitution which will in all likelihood be passed by the new, second convocation of parliament.

Tensions Persist in Tighina; Compromise Reached

AU0303080593 Chisinau BASAPRESS in English 1100 GMT 1 Mar 93

[Text] Chisinau BASAPRESS, 1/3/1993—For several days the streets of Tighina (Bendery) are intensively patrolled by members of the workers groups in support of the militia force and guards of the so-called Dniester Republic, which is in itself an act of breaking Snegur-Yeltsin Convention signed on July, 21 (1992). "Border Guard Custom Points of the so-called republic were installed at the railway station in Tighina (Bendery)" stated Constantin Bobeica, chief police officer in Tighina, to a BASA correspondent. "At present, the police can not detect the Custom Officers or Border Guards of Dniester because they do not wear a uniform. Nevertheless we know, for certain that customs officers check luggage in common forms of transport as well as the trucks transporting goods," concluded Constantin Bobeica.

In Tighina (Bendery) the picketing of the Moldovan police residence as well as the staff of the peaceful forces of Russia was suspended. It was initiated three weeks ago by the members of the Women Organization for the Defence of Dniester. As a result of the negotiations the United Control Committee decided to transfer the section of passports and visas (which remained subordinated to the Interior Affairs Ministry of Moldova) to the sections where the towns militia forces are located. In accordance with the decision of the United Control Committee moved the police moved away from the new offices to the residence of the Militia Municipality. Asked by a BASA correspondent, Constantin Bobeica, the commander of the Tighina police mentioned that about 100 member of the Public Security from both sides remained intact. Continuing to execute their functions the prosecutor and the law-court of the town remained under the jurisdiction of Moldova. The transport police of the city and the patrol service whose activities was not yet sanctioned by the United Control Committee are still under the control of the so-called Republic of Dniester.

Kazakhstan

President Delegates Top Executive Responsibilities

OW0303124293 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1142 GMT 3 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev on Tuesday [2 March] signed an order on the delegation of responsibilities between the vice-president, prime minister, deputy prime minister, chief of the president's staff and cabinet of ministers.

Vice-President Yerik Asanbayev will analyze methods for developing Kazakhstan as a sovereign state, improve the mechanism for the evolution of market institutions and market legislation and be responsible for social welfare matters.

The prime minister will head the cabinet of ministers, coordinate the functions of ministries and departments, put the anti-crisis program into effect, and manage the agriculture sector.

Presidential Edict Forms Special 'Anti-Mafia' Groups

PM0203110193 Moscow KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA in Russian 27 Feb 93 p 1

[Ye. Dotsuk report under the "Mafia" rubric: "Someone To Put Away Again"]

[Text] Only now has it become clear that day turned to night 4 December 1992, mainly for Kazakhstan's bankers. A presidential decision was signed bearing the seemingly harmless title "On Increased Responsibility of Officials and State Administrative Organizations for the State of Discipline, Public Order, and Security"; the people immediately called it "anti-mafia," traders called it "anti-market."

Under the presidential edict, special groups provisionally termed "anti-mafia" have been set up in all oblasts, but these are certainly not subordinate to the oblast authorities. The Ministry of Internal Affairs, the Prosecutor's Office, the Committee for National Security, and the Committee for Financial Control have all immediately come together to implement the edict. The presidential edict has essentially squeezed out the Law on the Enterprise, which prior to this banned the checking and auditing of enterprises' economic activity and forbade demanding information from banks.

Checks that are unprecedented in the republic have been conducted on commercial structures—primarily on banks—during the two months since 4 December. Moreover, enterprises' foreign currency resources, the legitimacy with which licenses have been issued, and cases of administrators holding simultaneous positions in the state sector and commercial structures have all been carefully checked. The personnel conducting the checks have already thoroughly shaken up seven of the republic's oblasts. Of a total of 150 banks registered in Kazakhstan, machinations of one sort or another have been uncovered in 105. A total of 12 bankers have already been arrested in Alma-Ata, and in the republic as a whole the figure is around 40, according to information from the Prosecutor's Office.

In Kazakhstan it has long ceased to be something of a secret and has become almost official that bankers get a 20-percent "payout" in cash for loans, peculiar so-called "preferential" transactions, and "interest-free" credit, and suspicious delays in payments by banks, which in the meantime have done all they can to "play around" with their clients' money, have become the norm. Banks have even granted loans from... a pension fund. Bankers used to merrily sign references about the multimillion accounts of practically bankrupt clients, transferring the money using a fictitious advice note.

The case that has caused the most uproar so far concerns Turanbank, one of the largest banks in Kazakhstan, whose services have been used by extremely influential commercial structures and state enterprises. Turanbank Deputy Chairman Korzhov has been arrested. According to information from the Committee for National Security, bank account number 902 seemed to contain money that did not belong to anybody, and the bank would use this money to grant enormous loans, thus basically using someone else's money and thereby delaying payments to its clients. As a result of one such crafty operation involving Turanbank, a certain firm from Luxembourg headed by a Kazakhstan citizen named Asanov obtained a loan of 2.5 billion rubles [R], interest-free of course. The banker, however, was arrested for receiving a foreign currency "gratuity" from the Luxembourg businessman.

At the present time the "anti-mafia" groups have returned more than R1.5 billion and about $1 million to the state budget. But the state treasury will probably be topped up even more in the near future.

Deals at the Ulba Metallurgical Plant, from where beryllium ingots were secretly exported and sold in Russia, have already been exposed. The Caspian Defense Mining and Metallurgical Combine has made efforts to sell crystalline scandium for R5 million per kilogram. The chief of the Kazakhstan Civil Aviation Administration has committed an offense by appropriating humanitarian aid; the general director of the "Balkhashmed" Association has transferred money earned from copper sales to the account of a foreign firm which has used "Balkhashmed's" $7 million at its discretion; the deputy head of Zhambyl (formerly Dzhambul) Administration has been dismissed for moonlighting in his own commercial firm.

A fantastic workload now awaits judicial offices. And the number of people in custody has rapidly been supplemented to a considerable extent by market-minded citizens who have thus replaced the dissidents who traditionally languished in jail during the years of Soviet power. It has always been the case in our country that somebody has to go to jail.

Kyrgyzstan

Vice President Visits Tajik Border, Comments on Refugees

OW0203163493 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1556 GMT 2 Mar 93

[Report prepared by Andrey Pershin, Andrey Petrovskiy, and Vladimir Shishlin; edited by Boris Grishchenko; from the "Presidential Bulletin" feature—following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The law enforcement bodies are doing their best to try to prevent the infiltration of Tajik militants or smuggling of drugs and weapons into Kyrgyzstan, Vice President Feliks Kulov told Interfax at the end of a weekend trip to the Alai region on the Tajik border.

He said the aim of his trip was to familiarize himself with the situation there and "to calm the local population which is somewhat severed from the overall situation having no chance of watching local television programs. Newspapers are almost unavailable in the region.

Kulov described the situation in border areas as stable and under government control. "There are no factors to unsettle it," he said. The Vice President was also confident that Tajik militants would be unable to penetrate into the country whose law enforcement bodies were working together with their counterparts of Tajikistan and Uzbekistan.

Kulov had lauded the activity by Uzbek President Karimov describing him as "one of the guarantors of stability and ethnic harmony in Central Asia as a whole."

However, he spoke of a number of incidents in which Tajik refugees fled across the border into southern parts of Kyrgyzstan. However, the government is taking measures to prevent this from happening. "Kyrgyzstan will not accept Tajik refugees in order to maintain the current stability," he said.

Measures Taken Regarding Tajik Opposition

PM0203135993 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 26 Feb 93 p 2

[Aleksandr Ryabushkin report: "Kyrgyzstan Strengthens Its Borders"]

[Text] Bishkek—Army and militia subunits and army hardware have been transferred from Bishkek to Osh Oblast in the south of the republic. Kyrgyzstan is taking security measures in connection with the vigorous actions by government troops in Tajikistan against the armed opposition.

There is every reason to assume that retreating groupings will attempt to seek shelter on Kyrgyz territory. Here is confirmation: Armed opposition formations have already turned up in Tajikistan's Dzhirgatalskiy border rayon. The number of refugees in Osh Oblast itself has increased noticeably, and the crime situation has become exacerbated. The local authorities have taken precautions, tightened up the passport regime, and organized posts on mountain roads.

To all appearances, Kyrgyzstan is coordinating its actions with the leadership of the neighboring republic and, in addition to support in military matters, is giving what humanitarian assistance it can. Truckloads of food have already been sent from Osh along the Pamir Highway via Khorog.

Tajikistan

Iranian Ambassador Denies Iran's Support to Rebels

LD0203142393 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1313 GMT 2 Mar 93

[Text] Dushanbe March 2 TASS—Iran's Plenipotentiary Ambassador to Tajikistan, 'Ali Ashraf Shabestari, has described as "absurd and provocative" reports published by local newspapers alleging that Iran jointly with other countries had helped Tajik Islamic fundamentalists purchase weapons in Afghanistan and that it had financed a meeting held by the Tajik opposition in April-May, 1992.

"Apparently, someone is to gain by throwing a shadow on Iran and driving a wedge between the two people historically linked by ethnic and cultural grounds, a common language and other spiritual values," the Iranian ambassador said.

According to the ambassador, Iran's aid to Tajikistan is of an exclusively humanitarian character. Iran sent to Tajikistan over 500 tonnes of food supplies and medications. The humanitarian aid was proportionally distributed between the worst affected areas of Tajikistan. According to the Iranian ambassador, more relief supplies are expected to arrive in Tajikistan soon.

The Iranian ambassador noted that during meetings with new Tajik leaders bilateral relations were discussed in the sphere of economics and culture and the expansion of humanitarian aid.

The ambassador expressed the hope that relations between Iran and Tajikistan would develop in the direction of strengthening good neighbourly relations and traditional ties.

Government Not To Impose Blockade on Autonomous Region

OW0203151493 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1423 GMT 2 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Chairman of the Tajik parliament, Imamali Rakhmonov, promised the residents of the Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Region not to impose an economic blockade on the mountain regions of the Pamirs.

According to some sources, about a thousand militants of the opposition are hiding in Gornyy Badakhshan. In view of this, the local population fears lest the government might terminate the supplies of food stuffs and first necessities to Gornyy Badakhshan.

The parliament's Vice-Chairman Kazidavlat Koimdodov told Interfax that, weather permitting, a governmental commission would fly to Gornyy Badakhshan to study the local political and economic situation, with due account taken of all local factors, including the length of the border with Afghanistan.

Koimdodov denied rumors alleging that head of the Gornyy Badakhshan administration, Akbarsho Iskandarov, who had arrived in Dyushanbe for talks with the Tajik government, will be kept in the Tajik capital till the end of the operation against the armed opposition in the Pamirs. With the other members of the Gornyy Badakhshan delegation and with the Tajik governmental commission on the Pamirs, Iskandarov will fly out to Khorog to help stabilize the situation, said Koimdodov.

Reserve Officers Called Up; Fighting Continues

LD0203183893 Moscow Mayak Radio Network in Russian 1400 GMT 2 Mar 93

[Text] The Tajikstan Defense Ministry decided to call up 200 officers from the reserve. A RIA correspondent learned from Russian military sources in Tajikistan that this step was taken to speed up the formation of the national Armed Forces. The same source reported that fighting between government forces and the opposition is continuing in the area of Garm and Komsomolabad.

Refugees Talk of 'Ethnic Cleansing' in Border Areas

MK0203145293 Moscow NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA in Russian 2 Mar 93 p 3

[Oleg Panfilov report: "In Garm There Is No Opposition, Nor Is There Any Population. The Flood of Refugees From the Republic Is Growing"]

[Text] The government newspaper NARODNAYA GAZETA of 27 February clarified the situation in the Garm region of Tajikistan east of Dushanbe. News services in the republic, including ITAR-TASS from Dushanbe, reported that on 22 February government troops dislodged opposition militants from the Karategina Valley, thus completing an operation. Information on the situation coming from various sources, however, clearly differs from the official version. Incidentally, the republic's authorities portrayed the operation as a peaceful one, in which a group of Popular Front fighters (118 men) flew in on military helicopters ostensibly to take part in the ceremony of "Oshi Oshti" ("Bread of Reconciliation"). No explanations were given as to why the "peacemakers" carried arms or what their real plans were. In the course of the operation the entire group was destroyed by opposition forces. Among those killed were 22 fighters from Kulyab Oblast. When the bodies were brought to Dushanbe, women gathered outside the Internal Affairs Ministry building demanding an end to the senseless killing of their sons and relatives.

NARODNAYA GAZETA reported among other things that a government delegation flew to Garm on 23 February. It was led by Munavarsho Nazriyev, Council of Ministers deputy chairman, and was joined by a group of TV journalists. First, the delegation was shot at by opposition snipers; second, the government members could see that one of the major population centers, Karategina, was totally deserted with the exception of two families. A story from the news agency KHOVAR says that its residents were taken away forcibly by opposition fighters—in other words, this is yet more supposition about fighters using violence against their own relatives and families. Similar stories about refugees from Tajikistan's southern areas who had moved across into Afghanistan have already been circulated. Moreover, republic head Emomali Rakhmonov suggested that women and children are being exchanged in Afghanistan for weapons—which sparked indignation in refugee camps near Mazar-e Sharif. This was told by refugees from the Shaartuz and Kabodiyen regions to correspondents of Russian publications who recently visited those parts. They had been driven away by tank and helicopter gunship fire rather than under pressure from the militants. They dismissed reports of women and children being exchanged for automatic weapons as lies, spread in a bid to justify the actions of the military.

Residents of most villages in the Karategina Valley have now abandoned their homes. A large number of them are at the Saratysh outpost close to Tajikistan's border with Kyrgyzstan. It was learned from refugees' accounts that they had to abandon their homes because their villages were being bombed by military planes and helicopters. An officer close to Tajikistan's military circles told NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA's correspondent during a private discussion that the use of concussion bombs against civilians could not be concealed. In this connection, the presidium of the Pamir-Badakhshan Autonomous Republic's Supreme Soviet addressed an appeal to the chairman of Tajikistan's Supreme Soviet which says, among other things, that Badakhshan's leaders recognize the Dushanbe government, but they reject all attempts at military interference. The appeal also voices the wish that the mass media should not inflame the atmosphere around Badakhshan, and says that "senseless lies" about people from Badakhshan should be stopped.

In the meantime the flood of refugees is growing, primarily across Kyrgyzstan's southern regions. Refugees from the Tursunzade area (in the west of the republic) who have made their way to Moscow talk about ethnic cleansing. According to them, the Tajik population in regions bordering Uzbekistan is being subjected to persecutions. Aminbek, a man of 55, gave a list of population centers where whole families were butchered: the area of Lakhuti—73 people including 20 children; the area of Pakhtakor—40 people; Pakhtakori Poyen—35 people; the area of Chapayev—170 people; the settlement of Leningrad—28 people; the village of Shirkent—15 people; and nearly 130 people in the town of Tursunzade itself.

Two Russians Killed, One Injured on Afghan Border

OW0203195593 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1904 GMT 2 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Two Russian security officers were killed and one other was seriously wounded while on discharge of duty in the Russian border troops on the Afghan border on March 1, the Security Ministry's Public Relations Department said. Russian Charge d'Affairs in Dushanbe and a group of Russian security officers attended the scene.

The Ministry expressed condolences to the bereft families.

Russia Agrees To Restore Air Defenses on Afghan Border

OW0203195293 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1904 GMT 2 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Russia has preliminarily agreed to consider reinstalling air defence radar stations on the Afghan border, Deputy Prime Minister of Tajikistan Mukhammad Said Ubaidullayev told Interfax. Commenting on last Saturday's [27 February] talks in Dushanbe between Russian Interior Minister Viktor Barannikov and Tajik officials, he said Russia was aware of the need to seal off the country's air space on the border as soon as possible.

Ubaidullayev said the Tajik government was hopeful that Barannikov would once again alert President Yeltsin to the complicated situation on the Afghan border which is also part of the CIS border.

Government Successes Against Opposition Forces Noted

PM0203145993 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 27 Feb 93 p 1

[Aleksandr Karpov report: "Tajikistan: The Opposition, While Resisting, Is Suffering Defeat"]

[Text] Tajikistan's Supreme Soviet Presidium has discussed a question on the sociopolitical situation in the republic.

Speaking at the session, Republic Parliament Head Imamali Rakhmonov stated among other things that Komsomolabadskiy, Garmskiy, Tajikabadskiy, Tavildarinskiy Rayons, and the Ramitskoye mountain gorge, which were in the hands of the armed opposition until recently, are today wholly controlled by government forces. He refuted allegations that oppositionist detachments based in Ramit, some 80 kilometers from the republic capital, intend to attack Dushanbe 5 March. At the same time, E. Rakhmonov expressed clear views on the subject of the work of local organs of power, and law and order.

Following the liberation of the Ramit mountain gorge, over 100 tonnes of explosives and military hardware were discovered there. Staffers at the Kofarnikhonskiy Rayon Internal Affairs and Security Service Department had no right to be ignorant of these facts. Rayon leaders sent salutatory telegrams to Dushanbe, expressing support for the policy to stabilize the situation being conducted by the incumbent authorities, although at this time the green flags of Islam were flying over rayon soviet executive committee buildings. In Garm, as it later emerged, an Islamic Republic was proclaimed. In this very rayon, a group of toopers from the Internal Affairs Ministry fell into a trap. They were greeted with bread and salt like long-awaited liberators, then dealt with cruelly and swiftly. Twenty-two corpses were dispatched to Dushanbe a few days ago. The fate of the remaining troopers is as yet unknown. The parliamentary speaker stressed that foreigners are fighting in the ranks of the antigovernment forces. One of them—a negro—was hanged by the women of Garm.

Work to improve the criminogenic situation in the republic is being carried out by forces from the Internal Affairs Ministry. Just recently, 80 criminal armed groupings numbering up to 300 people involved in pillaging and robberies and claiming to be representatives of the People's Front have been neutralized. More than 30 criminals, also operating under the guise of government supporters and making use of APC's for their purposes, were detained in Kofarnikhon.

The Supreme Soviet chairman also announced that weapons are being delivered from Pamir to Garmskiy Rayon. Armed antigovernment groupings from Gornyy Badakhshan are selling firearms to opposition groupings continuing resistance in other regions.

As before, the situation on the Tajik-Afghan border remains tense.

Under the CIS countries' Treaty on Collective Security, and in line with a decision by Commonwealth heads of state, four military battalions will arrive in Tajikistan over the next few days to offer assistance in strengthening border defense.

Islamic Fighters 'Hiding Behind Civilians'

PM0203142793 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 26 Feb 93 p 3

[Report by Valeriy Zhukov of KHOVAR and Anatoliy Ladin of KRASNAYA ZVEZDA: "Cunning and Deceit—the Weapons of the Vanquished. In Tajikistan's Garm Group of Rayons Operations Aimed at Disarming Islamic Formations Continue"]

[Text] Trying to at least somehow preserve their influence in these rayons, Islamic gunmen are utilizing well-tried methods—they are hiding behind civilians from government forces. The civilian population is being used as a shield by those who are continuing to conduct the armed struggle against government forces. Moreover, having lost their real force, they are displaying particular ruthlessness and cunning. For example, telegrams in support of the legal government in Dushanbe were sent to the capital on behalf of the chairman of Komsomolabadskiy, Garmskiy, and Tadzhik-Albadskiy Rayons. And indeed, 118 republic MVD [Ministry of Internal Affairs] fighters were some time later greeted in Garm with hospitality. But gunmen disarmed them and cruelly disposed of them all. It should be stressed that these were not special-purpose troops, but inexperienced soldiers of the internal troops organs who had only recently been drafted into the services.

Armed groups are also still operating in Dushanbe, terrorizing the population. In recently times alone 80 gangs of various sizes have been disarmed here. Thirty-two men who had been engaged in brigandage using armored vehicles and passing themselves off as members of the People's Front of Tajikistan, were detained in Kofirnikhon.

Despite such incidents of cunning and refined cruelty, the government and the joint forces of the MVF [expansion unknown], the National Security Committee, and the People's Front of Tajikistan understand that the civilian population of the Garm rayons is not to blame for the new casualties. Vehicles carrying food, medicine, and consumer goods have been sent to centers in the hills. Everything is being done that is necessary for the swiftest possible stabilization in this region.

Internal Affairs Minister on Law Enforcement Problems

LD0203094793 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0932 GMT 2 Mar 93

[Text] Dushanbe March 2 TASS—The Tajik militia (police) must restore its authority with the inhabitants of the republic, which had been squandered because of the criminal position of the former leadership of the law enforcement agencies who denounced neutrality during the armed confrontation and legal chaos, according to the new minister of internal affairs of Tajikistan, Major-General Yakub Salimov, 35.

The minister said in an interview with the republic's NARODNAYA GAZETA (People's Newspaper) that the law enforcement agencies in the republic consider it their main tasks at present to ensure law and order and declare total war on organised crime. According to the minister, eighty criminal groups have been rendered harmless in the republic lately. Most of them called themselves forces of the Popular Front of Tajikistan but engaged in burglary, robbery and extortion.

The law enforcement agencies have seized thousands of firearms, illicitly held by inhabitants, and 27 armoured vehicles. Yakub Salimov said that the Interior Ministry troops in conjunction with the national army and the national security committee forces took part in clearing landmines in a number of important installations, including the buildings of the council of ministers, the parliament, the Dushanbe thermal power station. The investigation of 17 criminal cases connected with the planting of mines by the retreating opposition forces has been completed and the cases have been passed on to the Supreme Court of Tajikistan for trial.

Turkmenistan

Further on Visit by Georgian Prime Minister Sigua

LD2702181993 Moscow Ostankino Television First Channel Network in Russian 1200 GMT 27 Feb 93

[From the "Novosti" newscast]

[Text] Georgia, while not being a member of the CIS, is striving toward bilateral cooperation with all the CIS states. Today a government delegation from that republic, headed by Prime Minister Tenghiz Sigua, held talks in Ashgabat.

[Correspondent K. Babayev] The aim of the visit, Sigua said, is to arrange mutual deliveries of food and industrial goods and the transportation of natural gas from Turkmenistan. The main argument broke out around this. Last year Georgia was supplied with 3.5 billion cubic meters of gas. For three-quarters of the year mutual payments were settled in rubles, and for the last quarter they were settled on a clearing basis. Mechanical engineering products, consumer goods, and tea arrived in Turkmenia at world prices. These were not top-quality products, so the republic refused Kutaisi Kolkhida trucks and a number of other goods. The balance of payments today is $80 million in Turkmenistan's favour. Georgia, however, is in no condition to pay off this debt in either hard currency or rubles.

Taking into consideration the difficult economic and political situation in that country, the Turkmen delegation came to the talks. A treaty on trade and economic cooperation was signed and it was agreed to continue mutual payments on a clearing basis.

Republic To Supply Georgia With Gas

OW0103120693 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1101 GMT 1 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Tbilisi and Ashgabat have agreed on gas supplies to Georgia on a clearing basis, Tengiz Sigua, Georgian Premier told journalists in Tbilisi airport on his arrival from Turkmenistan.

He said that in exchange Georgia will supply tea, engineering industry products, electric machinery, and consumer goods. The deliveries will be evaluated in dollars.

Georgia used to receive 17 million cubic meters of gas from Turkmenia while it needs at least 20 million. Sigua said that an understanding has been reached that daily the supplies will grow to 20-22 million cubic meters.

Earlier, Georgia had agreed with Iran that starting from the second half of 1993 the latter will supply two million cubic meters annually.

Uzbekistan

Commission Urges Professionally Implementing Reforms

OW0203165393 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1558 GMT 2 Mar 93

[Report prepared by Andrey Pershin, Andrey Petrovskiy, and Vladimir Shishlin; edited by Boris Grishchenko; from the "Presidential Bulletin" feature—following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The Uzbek commission for control over the implementation of economic reforms urged the leaders of ministries and departments, local governments and industrial enterprises, irrespective of their property status, to promote economic development and assert the principles of market economics.

This body was set up on President Karimov's initiative and its appeal says that "the inertness of totalitarianism is still strong in Uzbekistan," and that to this day "active people fall into the government's disgrace, while overly cautious and slow-moving people keep afloat." "Not all the leaders conscientiously implement the president's decrees, laws passed by the parliament and resolutions taken by the cabinet of ministers," says the appeal.

The commission stated that "mid-level leaders should display their professional skills and maturity, and ensure a carefully thought-out and gradual transition to market relations in accordance with adopted laws."

The appeal also expressed hope that government bodies will help the president, the parliament and the cabinet of ministers to attain their goals and ensure the Uzbek people's well-being and prosperity.

Diplomatic Relations With 64 States Reported

LD0203182793 Tashkent UZBEKISTAN APN in Russian 1200 GMT 2 Mar 93

[Text] Tashkent, 2 Mar—On 2 March 1992, exactly one year ago, the state flag of the Republic of Uzbekistan was hoisted outside UN headquarters. The republic has now been recognized by 125 states and has established diplomatic relations at ambassadorial level with 64 of them. Uzbekistan is opening diplomatic missions in 39 countries. Foreign economic activity has also become more energetic and over 600 joint enterprises representing 45 countries have now been registered in the republic.

Small Percentage of Russians Want To Leave

OW0303124193 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1142 GMT 3 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The Russian Embassy in Uzbekistan believes that only 5-7% of the three million Russians living in the republic intend to leave for the Russian Federation itself, Interfax was informed by Gennadiy Bessonov, who is head of the consular department.

Bessonov said that many are deterred by the lack of clarity regarding their status in a foreign state. Others would like to receive Russian citizenship as a guarantee of their rights, but continue to live in Uzbekistan, which has a population of twenty-one million. The diplomat considered that Russia and Uzbekistan must reach agreement on dual citizenship for a transitional period. This, he said, would put people's minds at rest and determine the status of former Soviet servicemen currently serving in the Uzbek armed forces.

The embassy has already notified Russian President Boris Yeltsin of the above issues and a Russian defense ministry representative will arrive shortly in Uzbekistan to study the problems affecting Russian servicemen.

Armenia

Karabakh Forces 'Firmly Control' Sarsang Dam

NC0203204193 Yerevan Armenia's Radio First Program Network in Armenian 1830 GMT 2 Mar 93

[Text] An exchange of fire took place on the border near Nerkin-Karmiragpyur, Movses, and Aygepar in Tavushskiy Rayon between 2100-2300 tonight. The enemy used howitzers and machine guns. There are no casualties on our side.

The Armenian Defense Ministry Press Service informed ARMENPRES that the situation was calm in other border regions of Armenia.

According to reliable and official sources, the Karabakh self-defense forces are continuing to firmly control the basin of the Sarsang reservoir. They also control the Armenian villages liberated recently. The Azerbaijani Defense Ministry is trying to distort the true picture.

According to the Nagorno-Karabakh Republic's self-defense forces headquarters, a relative calm prevailed in Karabakh today.

NKR Disarming Groups; Attack on NKR Official Reported

NC0203200393 Yerevan Armenia's Radio First Program Network in Armenian 1830 GMT 2 Mar 93

[Text] In order to speed up the work to form the unified armed forces and to step up the fight against organized crime, the Nagorno-Karabakh Republic's [NKR] Defense Committee is taking measures to disarm illegally armed groups. Nearly 40 people have been disarmed in NKR recently. Those disarmed were members of armed groups that were outside the structures of the Interior Ministry and the State Directorate for National Security. According to information received by ARMENPRES, such groups were disarmed near Stepanakert, and in Martuni and Shusha. More than 50 firearms were seized. Investigations have been opened into all these cases.

An investigation has also been launched into the assassination attempt against Marsel Petrosyan, head of NKR Supreme Soviet's Information and Press Department, by unknown persons in Stepanakert on 22 February. The criminals inflicted several knife wounds on Petrosyan before escaping. Petrosyan's life is in no danger, however.

Parliamentary Elections Set for Early Autumn

OW0203181293 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1641 GMT 2 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] In his interview with Interfax Babken Ararktsyan, the chairman of the Armenian parliament, declared that new parliamentary elections "will probably be held early autumn this year." In Ararktsyan's opinion, it is necessary to adopt a new constitution and to divide the powers of the legislative and executive branches before elections.

Food Prices Increase by 150-200 Percent in 1993

LD0203193793 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1206 GMT 2 Mar 93

[By ARMENPRESS for TASS]

[Text] Yerevan, 2 Mar—Prices of basic foodstuffs in Armenia have increased by an average of 150-200 percent since the beginning of this year. According to an independent sociological research service at Yerevan University, the cost of the consumer basket is now estimated to be 13,000 rubles a month per person. At the moment minimum wages and pensions remain at the same level as last year—2,000 rubles. According to the Armenian president's press service, the next indexation of incomes will probably take place on 1 April.

Azerbaijan

One Month State of Emergency in 3 Rayons

NC0203183493 Baku Radio Baku Network in Azeri 1700 GMT 2 Feb 93

[Text] Considering the real threat to life as a result of mass disturbances, including acts of violence and activities of illegal armed groups, President Abulfaz Elchibey has issued a decree imposing a one-month state of emergency in Kubatlinskiy, Zangelanskiy, and Dzhebrailskiy Rayons.

Forces Repel Armenian Attack on Sarsang Dam 1 Mar

NC0203184393 Baku Radio Baku Network in Azeri 1700 GMT 2 Mar 93

[Excerpt] The Azerbaijani Defense Ministry's Analytical Information Center issued the following communique today:

Relentless fighting continued in Agderinskiy Rayon today. Our military subunits rebuffed a new attack by Armenian occupationist forces on the Sarsang reservoir last night. Many enemy troops were killed in the clashes.

The border areas in Kedabekskiy and Akstafa Rayons and Alibeyli and Agdam in Tauzskiy Rayon were fired on from Armenia with various types of arms periodically during the [word indistinct]. The enemy fire was returned. [passage omitted]

Defense Ministry, Russian Army Roles in Attempted Coup

NC0203203593 Baku TURAN in English 1341 GMT 2 Mar 93

[Text] Baku, 2 Mar (TURAN)—Information connected with the theme of state coup again appeared within the last days in the mass media of Azerbaijan. So, Minister of Internal Affairs Iskender Khamidov said in his interview to the AZADLYG newspaper that a plan of explosion of the presidential helicopter was worked out when President Elchibey was in Gyandzha in the beginning of February. Information on the prepared terrorist act was obtained beforehand and it was possible to avert it. By Khamidov's words, the coup was prepared by the certain circles in the Azeri Ministry of Defence with the direct participation of the command of the Russian Army, located in Gyandzha (104th sub-unit of landing sub-unit). The main support for conspirators was sub-units of the Second Corps of the Azeri Army located there. By Khamidov's words the former commander of this formation Suret Guseynov had a direct connection with military circles of Russia. Iskender Khamidov refused to show a plan by which the coup was going to be realized.

But the Chairman of the Executive Power of the People's Front of Azerbaijan [PFA] Farazh Guliyev in his speech at the conference of representatives of the PFA on February 27 informed that in Baku, at one of the cottages in the country there was a meeting of those who worked out the scenario of the coup. According to their plan, several people among Russians, leaving [as received] in Baku, were going to be killed. After this Moscow should have interfered in events.

The TURAN agency was informed by the informational source in the apparatus of the president of the republic that at the closed meeting of the Milli Mejlis on February 19 ex-Minister of Defence Rakhim Gaziyev was given shorthand records of his negotiations with the commander of the 104th Russian landing sub-unit Sherbakov, which proved that the sides agreed on "realization of the action on February 15."

But the authorities passed ahead of events and as it was known, on February 9 the PFA made a statement on the prepared state coup.

Parliament Sets Conditions for Cooperation With Armenia

LD0203172993 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1455 GMT 2 Mar 93

[By AZERTAC for TASS]

[Text] Baku March 2 TASS—Azerbaijan is ready for parliamentary cooperation with Armenia if the latter cancels its decision to take over Nagorno-Karabakh, according to the speaker of the Azerbaijani Parliament.

"The cooperation of parliaments of Azerbaijan and Armenia is possible on condition that the Supreme Soviet of the neighbouring republic cancels its decision on Nagorno-Karabakh unification" with Armenia, Isa Kamberov told lawmakers on Tuesday [2 March].

He added that the leaders of the Armenian Parliament were informed about the position of Azerbaijan.

He also said that "the possibility of an Azeri-Armenian summit without mediators was also discussed."

First Deputy Prime Minister Departs for Georgia

NC0203204393 Yerevan Armenia's Radio First Program Network in Armenian 1700 GMT 2 Mar 93

[Text] Abbas Abbasov, first deputy prime minister of Azerbaijan, departed for a visit to Georgia on 2 March. The main purpose of his visit is to improve conditions for transporting goods to Azerbaijan. Abbasov is also scheduled to meet with Georgian leader Eduard Shevardnadze and Georgian Prime Minister Tengiz Sigua.

Committee on Economic Ties With Former USSR Republics Set Up

NC0203155693 Baku Radio Baku Network in Azeri 1700 GMT 2 Mar 93

[Text] The government has established a new committee affiliated with the Council of Ministers. It will be known as the Interstate Committee for the Coordination of Economic Relations. First Deputy Prime Minister Vakhid Akhmedov has been appointed the new committee's chairman. The Council of Ministers Press Center has informed an AZERTAC correspondent that the committee will work to upgrade the credibility and productivity of economic relations between Azerbaijan and the CIS members, Georgia, and the Baltic countries and give momentum to the process of drawing up intergovernmental agreements.

Opposition: Government Employing Fiscal Intimidation

NC0203165293 Baku ASSA-IRADA in English 1204 GMT 2 Mar 93

[Text] Baku, 02.03.93 (ASSA-IRADA)—Azerbaijan governmental authorities exert pressure upon opposition - and now it is financial - announced the Chairman of Azerbaijan National Independence Party Etibar Mamedov today at Milli Mejlis session. Representatives of the Ministry of Home Affairs and Republican Procurator's Office, for example, demanded accounts of the party and of its organ - "Millet" newspaper at the national bank and now try to intimidate the organizations, giving us financial help, to leave the party without means of sutsistance. According to what E. Mamedov said to ASSA- IRADA, [words indistinct] circumstances and possession of procurator's sanction may serve as a basis for the similar action.

Georgia

Shevardnadze on Ties With Russia, New Abkhaz Offensive

OW0203145493 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1424 GMT 2 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Georgia's new Constitution to be presented for nation-wide discussion this year will determine the state status of Abkhazia and South Ossetia, declared Georgian leader Eduard Shevardnadze at his meeting with journalists on Tuesday [2 March].

Speaking about Russian-Georgian relations, Shevardnadze pointed out that "the beginning of Georgia's collapse will be the beginning of Russia's disintegration because further destabilization in Georgia can have unpredictable consequences for the situation in North Caucuses."

Shevardnadze also reported that North Caucasian military formations supporting the Abkhazians intend to begin an offensive against Sukhumi on March 4. "This could have catastrophic consequences as the front line lies through a city inhabited by 80,000 peaceful residents."

Shevardnadze Says Grachev Visit Worsened Relations

LD0203171893 Tbilisi CONTACT INFORMATION AGENCY in Russian 1725 GMT 1 Mar 93

[Text] Describing the current relationship of our republic with Russia, E. Shevardnadze, chairman of the parliament and head of state of the Republic of Georgia, stated in his traditional radio interview that of late this relationship has become seriously complicated. The recent visit to Gudauta and Batumi by Russian Federation Defense Minister Pavel Grachev and his utterly ill-considered statements played a special role in aggravating them. The Georgian parliament, however, is continuing work on the draft agreements between our countries concerning the length of stay of Russian troops on Georgian territory and in the area of conflict in particular and on other questions. Therefore, it is my belief, stated E. Shevardnadze, that talks with Russia will be resumed and all the disputed questions will be resolved at the coming fourth and final round. Touching upon the political situation in Russia, the head of state declared that he rules out the possibility of a new putsch at this stage.

During the interview a wide range of topics was considered: the situation in Adzharia, relations between Georgia and Iran, the work of parliament, law and order issues, the socioeconomic situation of the republic's population, and also forthcoming visits by the head of state to Armenia, Turkey, Ukraine, Germany, and the PRC.

Shevardnadze Proposes Meeting With Abkhazians

OW0303141493 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1358 GMT 3 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Georgian leader Eduard Shevardnadze has proposed that the Abkhazian authorities in Gudauta meet during his visit to Sukhumi which commenced March 3. This announcement was made by Shevardnadze himself in front of journalists at Tbilisi Airport before his departure for the Abkhazian capital. "If the Gudauta leaders are willing, then the contact may take place," he said.

Shevardnadze said that he was currently interested most in the activities of Russian Defense Minister Pavel Grachev during the latter's visit to Gudauta at the end of last week. "We have the opportunity to gain full information about the aim of the visit," the Georgian leader pointed out. "I do not believe that this was merely a tour of inspection, and even rule this out," he stressed.

Shevardnadze announced that he intended to meet representatives of the Abkhazian civilian community during his visit to Sukhumi.

Wants Information on Grachev Visit

LD0303135493 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1326 GMT 3 Mar 93

[By GEORGIAN NEWS AGENCY for TASS]

[Text] Sukhumi March 3 TASS—Georgian leader Eduard Shevardnadze arrived in the Abkhazian capital on Wednesday [3 March] to inspect the combat readiness of Georgian troops there and to receive reliable information on the recent trip to Abkhazian-controlled Gudauta of Russian Defence Minister Pavel Grachev.

Shevardnadze told reporters he also intends to meet those Abkhazians who enjoy popularity among their ethnic kin "to jointly look for solutions of the problem facing us."

He added he may meet residents of Gudauta if they wish so.

Shevardnadze will meet Tamaz Nadareishvili, chairman of the pro-Georgian government of Abkhazia.

On Wednesday the situation was quiet in Sukhumi, no shootings were heard.

'Fierce Fighting' Continues in Tkvarcheli Area

LD0303104093 Moscow Ostankino Television First Channel Network in Russian 0900 GMT 3 Mar 93

[From the "Novosti" newscast]

[Text] According to information that has reached us from the Abkhazian Ministry of Defense, intensive crossfire continues in the Gumista direction in the zone of the Georgia-Abkhazia conflict. The Georgian side is shelling the villages of Eshera, Gvandra, and also a laboratory of Russian troops in the village of Nizhnyaya Eshera. Fierce fighting is under way in the Ochamchira-Tkvarcheli direction, in the zone of the partisan movement. And, according to the latest information from the Abkhazian Defense Ministry, Georgian Government troops are retreating here and re-grouping their forces.

Panic has set in in the town of Ochamchira; property is being hurriedly taken out of Abkhazia to the central regions of Georgia, and movement is being hindered by detachments of Loti Kobaliya across the territory of Mengreliya.

Russian Military Laboratory Shelled

OW0303120793 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1141 GMT 3 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] On March 2, intensive shooting continued along the Georgian-Abkhazian frontline on the bank of the Gumista River near Sukhumi, the Georgian Defense Ministry's press service and the Abkhazian Defense Department report. According to sources in Gudauta, Georgians shelled the Russian military laboratory in the village of Nizhnaya Eshera.

Tbilisi reports that on Tuesday [2 March] night, an Su-25 Russian military aircraft flew over Sukhumi. However, Georgian air-defence units did not allow it to reach lower altitude to drop a missile.

Tamaz Nadareishvili, the chairman of the Abkhazian Council of Ministers which is accountable to Tbilisi, told Georgian TV that on Tuesday the Abkhazians shelled Sukhumi again. Several people were wounded and a number of buildings were ruined. To quote Nadareishvili, in the afternoon March 3, electricity supplies to Sukhumi will be resumed. Energy supplies to that city were interrupted ten days ago after the electric power line in the Ochamchira region was damaged. Fresh water supplies will also be resumed, he said.

Controversial reports are coming from Abkhazia's Ochamchira region. According to the Georgian Defense Ministry's press center, Georgian formations have regained the village of Labra which was seized by the Abkhazians on Monday. Gudauta alleges, however, that this village is still controlled by Abkhazian guerillas. The Abkhazian Defense Ministry reports that Georgian troops are retreating all along the frontline. Georgians are hastily removing property from Ochamchira and Sukhumi.

Border Troops Criticize Border Organization

AU0203212993 Tbilisi SAKARTVELOS RESPUBLIKA in Georgian 26 Feb 93 p 1

["Address by the Military Council of the Border Troops to the Georgian People, the Republic of Georgia Parliament, and the Republic of Georgia National Security and Defense Council"; place and date not given: "Finally, and Once and for All, We Must Clearly Decide How We View the Protection of the State Borders and to Whom We Are To Entrust This Extremely Responsible Duty"]

[Text] Dear Friends!

It is because of the complex sociopolitical situation that has taken shape in the republic, which, to a certain degree, is due to the fact that we do not have a Georgian border army, that we are addressing you.

Georgia, our long suffering homeland that has endured so many storms, is in extreme danger today. The Georgian people are at the limit of their moral, psychological, and physical endurance. The current war in Abkhazia and other fratricidal confrontations that have been unleashed in certain other regions has transformed the labor of many generations into ruins. The country has been divided into separate parts.

The atmosphere of conflicts, misunderstanding, and hatred has enveloped many sides of social life. The painful phase of division and disintegration has also affected Georgia's borders. Abkhazia, Samachablo [South Ossetia], Adzharia, Meskhet-Javakheti, and certain other regions have become infected with the dangerous disease of separatism.

How unfortunate that, in spite of the decree issued by the Georgian National Security and Defense Council on 5 January 1993, and the decision adopted by the Cabinet of Ministers on 17 February of this year, there are forces in Georgia's official state structures who view that it is too expensive to organize and protect the borders and who have proposed to us that they be left open and, on the contrary, there are also those who are taking responsibility for the protection of the borders "gratis."

Mutually exclusive views are often being published in the Georgian press. Some are calling for the immediate removal of the Russian border troops, which today is practically impossible and undesirable until we have trained our own forces. Others are unjustifiably delaying the process of taking possession of the borders.

At the same time, military formations have been sprouting like mushrooms, for whom it is in no way advantageous to protect Georgia's borders.

All those who, in word or deed, openly or secretly, are preventing us from creating Georgian border troops and protecting the state borders are the enemies of Georgian independence.

How unfortunate that Georgia today resembles that bankrupt nobleman who indeed had his own gateway but no wall around his estate.

It is part of a nation's natural rights that it should have its own territory, which is impossible without borders. Georgia's independence begins and ends with its borders.

Georgia today does not have its own practice of organizing its borders. This is no surprise, as we have not looked after the borders of our homeland for two centuries. These questions were decided by others.

However, the unfortunate thing is that, now that the desired time has come, we have made a hesitant start to organizing our own borders.

Why?

Who is to blame?

We do not want to pass our responsibility onto others, but we are obliged to tell the Georgian people the truth: The ruling bodies of the Georgian state are not adopting all the necessary measures so that the border troops can take the protection of the republic's borders into their own hands.

The place of the border troops in the structures of the Georgian Armed Forces has not been decided, as a result of which the complex process of the organizational development of the border troops is being artificially delayed.

Finally, and once and for all, we must clearly decide how we view the protection of the state borders and to whom we are to entrust this extremely responsible duty.

Many problems that we have mentioned earlier will be resolved by themselves if Georgia has a border army whose numerical strength corresponds to the country's geopolitical situation.

The existence of a border army is one of the fundamental signs of statehood and delaying its creation by even one day is equivalent to betraying the people.

The time has come to put an end to facts of theft, speculation, and robbery at the borders. Drug dealers and representatives of the mafia must leave the border. It is time to halt the division of responsibility for the protection of Georgia's borders among ground, naval, and air units and the splitting up of the single state border into separate independent parts. Georgia does not need to be split up. The protection of the borders should be in the hands of one body.

We border troops realize that we live in conditions in which there is greater respect for force than for the law.

We are ready to use force but only on the basis of the law.

[Signed] The Military Council of the Border Troops.

Syrians, Jordanians, Turks in Abkhazia Fighting

LD0203200493 Moscow Radio Moscow in Arabic 1400 GMT 2 Mar 93

[Text] We just received a telephone call from our correspondent Igor Ratsostov in the small town of Afon in Abkhazia in which he reports that Syrian, Jordanian, and Turkish volunteers are participating in the activities of the combat operations taking place on the Abkhazian-Georgian front.

Gas Pipeline Supplying Armenia Blown Up Again

OW0203171593 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1638 GMT 2 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] At approximately 16:30 local time [1330 GMT] on Tuesday [2 March] the pipeline which supplies fuel to Armenia was blown up on Georgian territory for the fourth time in the last month and a half. The explosion, like the last three, occurred in Georgia's Marneuli region, the Armenian president's press service told Interfax.

The pipeline across Georgian territory is the only truly functioning channel of gas to Armenia at present. Lately, the pipeline has been supplying Armenia with about 1.8 Mn [million] cubic meters of gas per day, although the republic has a daily demand of about 7.5 Mn cubic meters.

The other pipeline which once supplied gas to Armenia runs through the Caucasus region of Azerbaijan, and has been blockaded for more than a year.

Estonia

Velliste on Talks With Polish President, Prime Minister

WS0203153793 Tallinn ETA NEWS BULLETIN in English 1655 GMT 1 Mar 93

[From 1 March, 1993 RAHVA HAAL p 1]

[Text] 1 March 1993—"Our demand on quicker Russian army withdrawal enjoys full support in Warsaw. The Polish government does not find that human rights are being violated in Estonia. Poland has promised to support us on joining the Council of Europe," said Foreign Minister Trivimi Velliste in his interview to ETA after his arrival from an official visit to Poland.

Velliste met the Polish President, Premier, Foreign Minister and other state officials during his visit, noting that interest towards Estonia is big. Both governments will do their best to widen business contacts, there is enough room for development, Velliste stressed. The Polish government has decided to do away with all obstacles on the Polish-Lithuanian border to finish the Via Baltica project. The documents on visa free travelling were signed in Warsaw to enforce it.

Ninth Round of Talks Begins With Russia

OW0303123493 Moscow BALTFAX in English 1147 GMT 3 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] On Tuesday [2 March], the ninth round of Estonian-Russian talks began in Lohusalu near Tallinn.

On the first day, working groups had talks on military, humanitarian, economic and border issues.

Head of the group of Estonian experts on border issues Raul Malk informed Baltfax that with Russian colleagues his group had discussed the draft agreement on the contiguous territories.

The plenary meeting of the delegations began on Wednesday morning.

'Petserimaa' Association Pickets Russian Embassy

WS0303102593 Tallinn ETA NEWS RELEASE in English 1605 GMT 2 Mar 93

[Text] Tallinn, March 2—A Petserimaa association uniting Estonian citizens who live the other side of Estonian-Russian administrative border on territory that under Tartu Peace Treaty concluded between the Republic of Estonia and Russia in 1920 still belongs to Estonia, picketed Russia's embassy in Tallinn to present Ambassador Aleksandr Trofimov their statement.

The statement on returning the land to Estonia, stopping violation of human rights of Estonian citizens residing at the above-mentioned territory, Russian troop pullout and canceling regulations under which Estonian citizens have to pay a $10 fee at the administrative border in order to cross the bridge at Narva, was not accepted by Trofimov and the embassy's door remained closed before the around hundred people.

Russia's annexation of Petserimaa territory is an historical unjustice against Estonia and the issue should be discussed not only at Estonian-Russian negotiations, but also at an international arena, a Riigikogu's deputy, one of the leaders of the Estonian Independence Party, Vardo Rumessen, told ETA.

"We must demand that Russia gave historical-juridical assessment to the events of 1940. In case the assessment is historically true, Russia would be compelled to recognize the Tartu Peace Treaty," Rumessen said.

Estonia proceeds from Tartu Peace Treaty on defining its borders with Russia while Russia recognizes the border line of 1945 under which Petersimaa belongs to Russia.

Latvia

Delegation Led by Gorbunovs Visits France

Meets Senate President

LD0203192393 Riga Radio Riga Network in Latvian 1000 GMT 2 Mar 93

[Excerpt] A delegation of the Republic of Latvia, led by Supreme Council Chairman Anatolijs Gorbunovs, is visiting France. This morning we were phoned from Paris by Anta Busa, an official of the Supreme Council press center.

[Begin Busa recording] This morning Supreme Council Chairman Anatolijs Gorbunovs, who is in Paris with other members of the Latvian delegation, arrived at the French Senate, and met its President Mr. Monory, as well as the leader of the Baltic Support Group in the Senate, Mr. (Huriet). The French first acquainted themselves with the Baltic situation; they were interested in relations with Russia.

M. Monory asked about possible spheres of French interest in Latvia, about fields in which French industrialists and owners of large companies would get the speediest response to their offers. Mr. Gorbunovs emphasized three fields: possible assistance in the reconstruction and modernization of the airport, which was indeed offered yesterday by a representative of a French firm from the [word indistinct] council headquarters; the wood-processing and furniture industry; and an interest that France has shown in the past two months, the possible acquisition of the large Alfa industrial complex, and its modernization and adaptation to developing civilian manufacture. As Mr. Gorbunovs put it, the privatization of the Alfa plant, and its sale, this time to foreigners, would also be a great psychological factor.

It is possible that this mood of help and goodwill from France is justified in the treaty of friendship and cooperation between the Republic of Latvia and the Republic of France, to be signed in two hours. The act of officially signing this treaty takes place at the Elysee Palace. [end recording] [passage omitted]

Holds Press Conference

WS0203153093 Riga LETA in English 0912 GMT 1 Mar 93

[Text] Riga, March 1 (LETA)—Anatolijs Gorbunovs, Chairman of the Supreme Council of Latvia, on Monday [1 March] went to France on an official visit. The head of the Latvian state was accompanied by Foreign Minister Georg Andreyev and Aivars Kreituss, Minister of Economic Reforms.

During a news conference held just before his flight to Paris, Anatolijs Gorbunovs pointed out that Latvia and France had traditionally close links in fields of culture, science and education. The Latvian leader pledged that the present visit was bound to put on additional accents to mutual relationship between the two countries, for instance, that in the field of economics. Anatolijs Gorbunovs expressed the hope that cooperation in military sphere which had been launched so successfully during the recent visit of the French defence minister in Riga, also would be expanded.

Asked if his visit was not too early in the view of the approaching election in France, Anatolijs Gorbunovs answered that it was most unlikely if any party which was to take power either in France or in Latvia, would have any objections to signing an agreement on friendship and cooperation, which in its turn would lay basis for accords to be signed in future.

Signs Cooperation Treaty

LD0203203593 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1948 GMT 2 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Nikita Yermakov]

[Text] Paris March 2 TASS—Head of the Latvian Supreme Soviet Anatolijs Gorbunovs, currently here on a visit, and French President Francois Mitterrand signed today a bilateral treaty on friendship and cooperation.

The document says, in particular, France will contribute to the development and deepening of relations between Latvia and the European Communities. It also envisages consultations at the summit level and regular meetings of French and Latvian foreign ministers.

Similar treaties with France have been signed by Lithuania and Estonia.

Speaking today at a breakfast in honour of the Latvian state head, the French president voiced the readiness to help Latvia to achieve genuine sovereignty in all spheres, including military. He stressed the determination to consolidate bilateral relations in all spheres to show the whole Europe Latvia is not isolated.

In his turn, Gorbunovs thanked the French president for understanding Latvian problems, the major of which is the presence of Russian troops.

The signing of the French-Latvian treaty is a proof of French goodwill and moral support of Latvia, Gorbunovs told a news conference. Latvia thinks this will be a good continuation of historically friendly bilateral relations.

Gorbunovs expressed interest in good Latvian-Russian relations. However, he noted, the agreement on withdrawal of Russian troops from Latvia has not been signed. Bearing in mind French role in Europe and the world, Latvia would like to invite it to negotiations with Russia as an observer.

Speaking of the position of the Russian-speaking minority, he said it was traditionally present in Latvia, and today Russians amount to 25 per cent of citizens and play a big role in the economy. Gorbunovs noted Latvia wants to calmly solve the problems on the basis of European examples.

Rejects Russian Call for Special Authority

LD0203192693 Riga Radio Riga Network in Latvian 1800 GMT 2 Mar 93

[Text] The visit by an official delegation of the Republic of Latvia to France continued today. After signing the Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation between Latvia and France, Anatolijs Gorbunovs, chairman of the Supreme Council of the Republic of Latvia, made an announcement to the press:

We are alarmed by reports that have appeared in the world's press agencies about the appeal made by Russian President Boris Yeltsin to international organizations, including the United Nations, to give Russia special authority to act as a guarantor of peace and stability on the territory of the former USSR. Latvia believes that this is an attempt to legitimize the presence of Russian military forces on the territories of other sovereign states. Understanding well the complex internal political situation in Russia, Latvia rejects the possibility of resolving it with means which may have unpredictable consequences. Although the concept of the former territory of the USSR cannot objectively be applied to the Baltic countries, there is a real threat that the North-Western Group of Forces deployed there might begin autonomous and uncontrolled activities.

With this announcement, Anatolijs Gorbunovs turned to French President Francois Mitterrand and the French Government, calling on them not to support the restoration of Russian hegemony in the Baltic lands.

Russian Officer Says Troop Withdrawal on Schedule

OW0203185893 Moscow BALTFAX in English 1728 GMT 2 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The withdrawal of Russian troops from Latvia is, Baltfax was informed by Colonel Stasys Knezys, responsible in the Latvian government for matters connected with the withdrawal, taking place according to schedule. However some deviations remained, he said.

The colonel said that 70 of the 95 Russian units in Latvia at the time the schedule for their withdrawal was agreed on September 8, 1992, had been withdrawn by March 1. 12,600 of the 22,000 servicemen were still on the republic's territory.

Knezys said that the withdrawal of some units had been postponed by between one and even three months, although other units had been removed ahead of schedule. The biggest delays were with air force units which had been due to leave the republic by December 31, but will now not leave before May.

People's Front for Selling Land to Non-Citizens

OW0203184093 Moscow BALTFAX in English 1727 GMT 2 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The Latvian People's Front faction, the largest in parliament, supported at its session on March 1 a proposal to amend the Constitutional Law. The amendments would grant individuals and legal entities who were not Latvian citizens the right to purchase land in the republic.

Lithuania

Bank Chairman Baldisis Presents Resignation

OW0203183093 Moscow BALTFAX in English 1727 GMT 2 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Lithuanian radio reported that on Tuesday [2 March] Vilius Baldisis, chairman of the board of the Bank of Lithuania, presented his resignation to the republic's President Algirdas Brazauskas.

According to the Lithuanian Constitution, the issue of the resignation of the Bank of Lithuania's chairman should be determined by the parliament upon the President's recommendation.

The Lithuanian parliament had considered the issue on no-confidence in the leader of the national bank three times. The former parliament discussed this issue on the initiative of former Prime Minister Gediminas Vagnorius who had sharp debates with the bank's leader on the pages of newspapers and in the parliament.

At that time the acting head of state, Algirdas Brazauskas, proposed that the bank chairman resign after the elections to the new parliament - Seimas. Baldisis disagreed with this proposal and a decree on the chairman of the board of the Bank of Lithuania was presented to the parliament for consideration in late January. As before, there were not enough deputies' votes to present a vote of no-confidence on Baldisis.

The parliament intended to consider the issue about the bank's leader during its spring session scheduled for March 10.

The issue on no-confidence was explained by the fact that the bank's leader failed to ensure mutual accounts of business entities within Lithuania and with its foreign partners and a timely issue of permanent Lithuanian currency - the litas. Besides, he is accused of several violations of law.

According to the radio, Baldisis rejected all accusations against him in his statement.

Yeltsin, Clinton Congratulate Brazauskas on Inauguration

OW0203184793 Moscow BALTFAX in English 1728 GMT 2 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] "I am sure that basing on the principles of good neighborhood, mutual understanding, and fruitful cooperation, we can improve relations between Russia and Lithuania by joint efforts, actively participating in negotiations. This prospect will undoubtedly meet interests of both countries," cites the Russian President Boris Yeltsin's message to Algirdas Brazauskas on occasion of his inauguration.

The press service of the Lithuanian President reported that the U.S. President Bill Clinton had also sent his congratulations on the occasion of Brazauskas' inauguration. The message cites that the United States is ready to participate in joint efforts to ensure Lithuania's security and well-being in the near future.

Russia To Supply Natural Gas for One Year

LD0203193393 Vilnius Radio Vilnius Network in Lithuanian 1000 GMT 2 Mar 93

[Excerpts] Mrs. Matazinskiene, director of the Economy Department at the Ministry of Power engineering, informs us that the state-owned enterprises Lietuvos Dujos and Lentrangas have signed an agreement on the supply of natural gas to Lithuania.

The agreement is for one year, according to which Lithuania will be supplied with 4 billion cubic meters of natural gas. This amount per year should be sufficient to Lithuania.

In addition to this a protocol was signed concerning the payments of debts. Currently the Lietuvos Dujos enterprise owes Russia more than 10 billion rubles. At the moment the sale price of gas for customers has not yet been confirmed or changed and continues to remain as defined in the documents signed earlier. [passage omitted]

The state-owned enterprise Lietuvos Dujos will have to pay Russia $81 per 1,000 cubic meters of natural gas of basic calorific value. This means that, depending on the calorific value, the price could be either $81.5 or $82. The price, however, will not be below $81.

The sale price of gas for heating homes or for other domestic needs will not change, Mrs. Matazinskiene said.

Sajudis Blames LDLP for Economic Deterioration

WS0303104293 Vilnius ELTA NEWS BULLETIN in English 1850 GMT 2 Mar 93

[From ELTA "NEWS BULLETIN" No. 196]

[Text] 2 March 1993—The Seimas of the Lithuanian political movement Sajudis has accused the LDLP [Lithuanian Democratic Labor Party], the Seimas and the Government of the deterioration of the state's economic situation. Sajudis has adopted a resolution saying that in the past six months of LDLP ruling, the living standard in Lithuania has lowered, the industrial production has decreased, the state's finance system has gone to pieces, the number of unemployment has greatly increased. Though the resolution does not present any statistical data.

According to the resolution, the LDLP majority at the Seimas and its Government are adopting laws which impede the return of property to its legal owners and restore the kolhoz system. With the deterioration of the finance system and industrial enterprises' activity, wages and prices for agricultural products have lost their value. An agreement with Russia on the oil supply has not yet been signed. The Government and the Seimas have also violated economic regulations, by ceasing the privatization of property and carrying out the money emission which has even more impoverished the people.

Commenting the resolution, the Chairman of the Economic Committee of the Seimas Kestutis Jaskelevicius said that the whole economic chaos had been created by the former Supreme Council and especially by the former governments headed by Gediminas Vagnorius and Aleksandras Abisala. "Now we are collecting the fruits of their labour," he said.

Ministry Prepares Trade Cooperation Accord With Ukraine

OW0203185593 Moscow BALTFAX in English 1729 GMT 2 Mar 93

[Followir item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Experts from Lithuania's ministry for trade and industry will hold talks with representatives of the Ukrainian government in Kiev Wednesday [3 March] with a view to signing an economic trade cooperation agreement for 1993.

Baltfax was informed by the ministry that supplies between the two countries worth almost $100 Mn [million] would be agreed. Lithuania this year intends to purchase almost 200,000 tons of ferrous and non-ferrous metals, piping, coal, chemical engineering products and PVC, and 500 tractors and bulldozers.

Ukraine wants to receive Lithuanian machine tools, electrical equipment, equipment for the food industry and agriculture, and televisions, tape recorders, fridges, cloth and other consumer goods.

A long-term agreement on economic and cultural cooperation for 1991-1995 between Lithuania and Ukraine already exists. The intergovernmental agreement for 1993 is expected to be signed shortly.

Government, Trade Unions Sign Agreement

WS0203155593 Vilnius ELTA NEWS BULLETIN in English 1759 GMT 1 Mar 93

[From ELTA "NEWS BULLETIN" No. 195]

[Text] 1 March 1993—After several years of difficult negotiations, finally the interests of the government and various trade unions have been defined and made official. Acting Prime Minister Bronislovas Lubys and the leader of Lithuanian Trade Unions, in a meeting, signed an agreement between the Government of the Republic of Lithuania and the Trade Unions of the Republic of Lithuania.

Trade unions are not in opposition to the government. They work as defenders for the members' economic and social rights.